Tertiary education in a second language: A case study of the linguistic repertoires and experiences of multilingual students at a South African tertiary institution who previously had French as medium of instruction

by
Catharina Marita Nieman

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Stellenbosch

Supervisor: Dr. Kate Huddlestone
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Department of General Linguistics

March 2021

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Marita Nieman

March, 2021

ABSTRACT

This study examined the language repertoires of a sample of African Francophone students, studying towards various degrees and diplomas at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) in South Africa. The study participants were from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and from Gabon where their Medium of Instruction (MOI) at school was French. The aim was to investigate the reasons why these students come to study in South Africa in the medium of English when it often has a negative impact on their academic success. For this reason, the study investigated the participants' linguistic repertoires and how they use their different languages in different contexts to gain academic success. Furthermore, the study investigated the specific role of English in their linguistic repertoires, their exposure to English and how English features in the context of their academic learning. From a sociolinguistic perspective, the study also investigated the reasons why these students choose to study in English in South Africa, their experiences of studying in English, the barriers they experience, and their attempts to overcome such barriers.

Data on the linguistic repertoires of the study participants were obtained through language background questionnaires and language portraits. The language background questionnaires also provided information on the participants' exposure to English to gain insight into their knowledge and use of English. Data from the language portraits were further investigated during individual interviews as language portraits help participants to reflect more deeply on the languages in their repertoire. Individual interviews were conducted and data was collected regarding the reasons for the participants studying in English in South Africa, as well as their experiences and the barriers they face. A thematic analysis was undertaken of the interview data.

Findings included that all the participants were multilingual and spoke an average of four languages. Their median age of exposure to English outside of school was 15 years. Most participants completed an English language course before commencement of their study at VUT. The median duration of such course was one year. French and English are the only two languages in the repertoires of the participants that are used for academic purposes. African Francophone students come to South Africa to study in English in order to secure a better future for themselves. They view English as an important language and feel that it is important to have a qualification from an English tertiary institution. However, they struggle with English

and find it difficult to study in English. They also experience other difficulties in adapting, but are motivated to succeed. It was concluded from the study that African Francophone students who come to South Africa to study in English would benefit from a structured academic English course before commencement of their studies. Such a course should not only address basic English proficiency, but also academic English proficiency.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie het die taal repertoires van ‘n groep Frankofoonse studente uit die Demokratiese Republiek van die Kongo (DRK) en Gabon in Afrika ondersoek. Die studente studeer tans vir verskeie kwalifiasies in Suid Afrika aan die Vaal Universiteit van Tegnologie (VUT) waar die onderrig taal Engels is. In die DRK en Gabon was hierdie studente se taal van onderrig Frans. Die doel was om te ondersoek waarom hierdie studente besluit het om in Suid Afrika, waar die taal van onderrig Engels is, te studeer aangesien Engels as taal van onderrig soms ‘n negatiewe impak op hul akademiese sukses het. Om dit te doen is die studie deelnemers se taal repertoires ondersoek om vas te stel hoe hulle dit in verskillende kontekste aanwend om akademiese sukses te verseker. Die studie her verder die spesifieke rol van Engels in hulle taal repertoires ondersoek, asook hulle blootstelling aan Engels en die funksie van Engels in hul akademiese konteks. Vanuit ‘n sosiolinguistiese perspektief het die studie verder ondersoek gedoen na die redes waarom die Frankofoonse studente besluit het om in Suid Afrika in Engels as onderrigtaal te studeer, asook hul ervarings en hindernisse tydens hul studie en hul pogings om die hindernisse te oorkom, al dan nie.

Data rakende die deelnemers se taalrepertoires is verkry met behulp van taalagtergrond-vraelyste asook taalportrette. Die vraelyste het ook data verskaf oor die deelnemers se blootstelling aan Engels om insig in hul kennis en gebruik van Engels te hê. Data van die taalportrette is ook verder ondersoek tydents die individuele onderhoude, aangesien deelnemers dieper kon reflekteer oor die verskillende tale in hul repertoires. Individuele onderhoude is ook met die deelnemers gevoer. In die onderhoude is data verkry rakende hul redes om in Suid Afrika in Engels as onderrigtaal te studeer, hul ervarings, asook hindernisse tydens hul studie. Die data is tematies geanaliseer en weergegee en sekere data is ook met behulp van beskrywende statistieke weergegee.

Die studie het bevind dat al die deelnemers multitalig is met ‘n gemiddelde hoeveelheid van vier tale in hul repertoires. Die gemiddelde ouderdom waarop hulle aan Engels buite skoolverband blootgestel was, is 14,7 jaar. Die grootste hoeveelheid deelnemers het voor die begin van hul studie by VUT ‘n Engelse taalkursus voltooi. Die gemiddelde tydperk van so ‘n kursus was 9,1 maande. Die deelnemers gebruik slegs Frans en Engels vir akademiese doeleindes. Die studie het verder bevind dat Frankofoonse studente van Afrika na Suid Afrika kom om hier ‘n kwalifiasie te behaal om sodoende ‘n beter toekoms vir hulself te bewerkstellig.

Engels as taal en ‘n kwalifikasie by ‘n Engelse tersiëre instelling word as baie belangrik geag. Hulle vind dit egter moeilik om in Engels as onderrigtaal te studeer en hulle ondervind ook ander probleme om aan te pas, maar ten spyte hiervan is hierdie studente vasberade en gemotiveerd om suksesvol te wees. Die gevolgtrekking wat van die studie gemaak kan word, is dat Frankofoonse studente uit Afrika wat in Suid Afrika in Engels wil studeer, baat sal vind by ‘n gestruktureerde Engelse kursus voor die aanvang van hul studies. So ‘n kursus sal voordelig wees indien dit nie slegs basiese Engelse vaardighede insluit nie, maar veral ook akademiese Engelse vaardighede.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the African Francophone students who study in South Africa. You are brave and courageous, choosing to walk a difficult road in order to create a better future. I salute you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I want to thank my supervisor Dr. Kate Huddlestone for her excellent guidance and dedication. I could not have completed my thesis without her. I also wish to thank all the members of the Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University for their efficiency and support.

I have so many wonderful people who supported me and I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart:
My HOD, Mrs. Cariana Fouché, thank you for your support and encouragement during difficult times in my journey and for not giving up on me.
My husband Riaan for your patience, for believing in me and supporting me. Thank you for always being there.
My sons René and Christian for being loving, patient and kind during my journey.
My wonderful family whom I have sometimes neglected in order to complete my thesis.
The best friends that anyone could ask for: Annelie, Mariette, Mathilda, Rynette, Santjie, Liesl and Jackie who were always there to encourage and give advice.

Above all, I want to thank the almighty God for guidance, strength and wisdom. All the glory to Him, without whom this would not have been possible! These last five years have been some of the most difficult in my life and I thank my heavenly Father for the miracles that I have experienced and for His grace during this time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 General background to the study

This study examines the language repertoires of a sample of African Francophone students, studying towards various degrees and diplomas at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) in South Africa. The students in the sample come from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and from Gabon, and their medium of instruction (MOI) at school was French. As a lecturer at VUT, I was interested in the reasons why these students come to study in South Africa through the medium of English when it often has a negative impact on their academic success. Therefore, in this study, I examine their linguistic repertoires to see what role each of the languages in their repertoires play in the different contexts in their lives. Furthermore, I investigate the role of English in their linguistic repertoire, their exposure to English and how English features in the context of their academic learning. From a sociolinguistic perspective, I also investigate the reasons why these students choose to study in English in South Africa, their experiences of studying in English, the barriers they face, and their attempts to overcome such barriers.

A growing number of students from African countries, who previously had French as MOI, are enrolling at South African tertiary institutions that have English as the sole MOI. In my experience, as a lecturer at a South African University of Technology, many of these students struggle to communicate and achieve academic success in this language. This has also been confirmed by studies such as those of Lee & Rice (2007:386) as well as Swami, Arteche, Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (cited in Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:387) where it was found that a lack of English language proficiency is one of the reasons why students struggle. However, fewer studies have investigated the students' own experiences of studying in a language that was not previously a MOI for them, as well as their reasons for doing so. Furthermore, the African context is unique because in many countries in Africa learners are not instructed in their native language, but in one of the colonial languages, such as English, French, and Portuguese. This is unique because in other parts of the world learners are mostly instructed in their native language.

1.2 Rationale

The study aims to highlight the problems faced by African Francophone students who study in South Africa in English. Previous research has found that tertiary institutions are not doing what they should to embrace these students by meeting their special requirements (Pineteh & Mulu, 2016: 387). This is despite the important role these students play in changing the worldwide face of education. Positive elements, such as their contribution to research, the diversity created in tertiary institutions, consciousness and appreciation created for other cultures and new perspectives in lecture dialogues, are not appreciated (Pineteh & Mulu, 2016: 386). According to Lee and Rice (2007:405), tertiary institutions have a degree of accountability for the satisfaction and success of international students. In this regard, they propose that institutions become more aware of the many forms of discrimination faced by international students, nurture cross-national approval and reject stereotypes of students from other countries. Host institutions should create a welcoming environment for international students by educating their academic and non-academic staff about the differences between local and international students with regards to things such as the student-lecturer relationship and intercultural differences. These institutions should also make international students aware of where to find support if they should encounter any intimidating or discriminating situations (Lee and Rice 2007:406).

In the South African context, little research has been done on the linguistic repertoires of the growing number of students from African Francophone countries whose MOI at school was French, their reasons for studying in South Africa and the barriers they experience. Such data can be used in a developmental capacity by VUT to ensure a better understanding of the difficulties these Francophone students experience with regards to English as MOI and studying in another country. Such an understanding and the data collected can also be used by VUT and other tertiary institutions in South Africa to find ways to support and create a better academic experience for these students.

1.3 Research questions

This study aims to address the following four research questions:

i) What are the linguistic repertoires of multilingual students who had French as MOI at school and are studying at a tertiary institution with English as sole MOI?

ii) What are the reasons that multilingual students who had French as MOI at school choose to study at a tertiary institution with English as sole MOI?

iii) How do multilingual students who had French as MOI at school describe their experiences of studying in English?

iv) What barriers do multilingual students who had French as MOI at school experience in adapting and integrating in studying at a South African tertiary institution with English as sole MOI, how do they attempt to overcome these barriers and how successful do they feel they are in overcoming such barriers?

1.4 Outline of the thesis

This first chapter has given an introduction of the study in terms of general background, rationale and the research questions that will be answered after completion of the study. In chapter 2, an overview of related studies will be provided and available literature will be discussed. Chapter 2 will also include an outline of the theoretical framework that informs this study. In chapter 3, a detailed exposition of the way in which data was gathered and analysed, will be provided. This will include the research methodology used, the selection of participants, methods of data collection and how the data was categorised and analysed. The ways in which ethical issues were addressed in the study, will also be discussed in chapter 3. In chapter 4 the results from the data collected will be analysed and presented. Any general themes, trends and specific patterns found in the data will be provided in this chapter. Chapter 5 will be the conclusion. In this chapter, the study's research questions will be answered, limitations of the study will be discussed and further avenues for research will be suggested.

1.5 Key terminology

Linguistic repertoire

Blommaert and Backus (2013:11) define repertoire as all linguistic resources that are available to people in a community in changeable or unchangeable forms. Shiweda (2013:6) defines it as the knowledge of a variety of language or codes that are available for speakers to use to communicate on a daily basis to reach their communicative goals. According to Hartford, Valdman and Foster (1982:25) linguistic repertoires refer to the totality of languages in a speaker's command that the speaker can use to communicate.

Multilingualism

When a speaker's linguistic repertoire consists of knowledge of three or more languages, such a speaker will be classified as multilingual. A multilingual person usually does not know all the languages in his or her repertoire equally well. Some people may speak, understand, read and write in one language, but are only able to speak and understand in the other languages they know. Furthermore, people may use the different languages they know in different fields such as one language in the home, one language in social settings, one language at work and another for religion (Richards and Schmidt 2010: 279). According to Kang (2013:55) multilingualism is a global phenomenon in the modern world and many people speak more than two languages.

Language portrait

Language portraits are used as a multimodal method to create language biographies. I have used the language portraits of Busch (2012). A language portrait is a body silhouette sketch where the participants are asked to use different colour pens to colour in the silhouette, indicating the different languages in their repertoires (Busch, 2012:8). Participants then have time to verbally explain the colours which help them to talk about their emotions with regards to the different languages in their repertoire (Busch, 2012:511).

L2

An L2, or second language, refers to any language in a speaker's repertoire other than his/her first language or native language (Richards and Schmidt 2010: 514).

MOI

Medium of instruction. The term refers to the language of teaching and learning at the tertiary institution. The official medium of instruction at VUT is English. Therefore, all lectures, communication and study material is in English.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and overview of literature

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of available published literature relevant to this study, which is to determine the linguistic repertoires of students who previously had French as a MOI, the reasons why these students choose to study in L2 English outside their home countries, the experiences of these students during their time of study in South Africa, the barriers they face and how they overcome such barriers. Multilingualism in its context as a global phenomenon will be discussed first. The discussion of multilingualism will include a characterization of the background of multilingualism in African Francophone countries. The theoretical context of linguistic repertoire as well as available studies on the linguistic repertoire of African Francophone students who study in South Africa in English, will follow. Thereafter, the global power of English and its influence on students to study outside their home countries in English will be discussed. Students' reasons for choosing to study outside their home countries in English or in a language which is not their previous MOI will also be examined. Finally, available literature about students' experiences during study abroad, as well as the barriers they experience and how they are able or unable to overcome such barriers, will be explored.

2.2 Multilingualism

A multilingual person can be defined as someone who knows and uses three languages or more, but usually, such people do not know all those languages equally well. Furthermore, the person may use different languages in different contexts and for different purposes, such as in the home, in the workplace, in social settings, for religious purposes, academic purposes or when speaking about their emotions (Richards and Schmidt, 2010:379). The term multilingualism refers not only to a person who can speak three or more languages, but can also refer to a group of people from a specific region or country, for example West-African countries such as Ghana and Nigeria (Richards and Schmidt, 2010:379). Gumperz (1971) and Busch (2006, 2012) argue that people develop their multilingualism through different applications and contexts and because such applications and contexts differ, the languages in their linguistic repertoire also don't develop similarly. In this regard, Pennycook (2010) describes language as a specialized resource that is used for particular social happenings. Blommaert (2010), in turn, describes the

differences in proficiency and competencies within the different languages of a person's linguistic repertoire as a linguistic supply store that the person draws on in different contexts. Furthermore, not having equal competency in the different aspects of a language (speaking, writing, reading and listening) does not mean that the person is deficient in that language (Blommaert, 2010:103). Kramsch (2002:171) believes that the main goal for multilinguals is learning different languages in order to communicate in different social contexts.

These statements regarding people's ability to speak the different languages in their repertoire not equally well, are further supported by Edwards (1994: 33) who describes multilingualism as an individual's understanding and use of languages and calls it individual multilingualism, pointing out that multilingual individuals have different language competencies for different languages in their linguistic repertoire. However, the definition by Edwards focuses on individual multilingualism and does not include groups or societies. On the other hand, researchers such as Aronin & Singleton (2010b) and Cenoz & Gorter (2010) have explored and focussed on the range of multilingualism in both society and in different functioning organisations such as educational institutions (Bayiga, 2016: 10). The examples of Canada and Switzerland are mentioned where societal multilingualism is institutional, meaning that specific provinces officially use specific languages while quite a large share of the residents remain monolingual. In countries in Europe, multilingualism is usually acquired through formal education. This form of multilingualism focusses on knowledge acquisition of whole languages. On the other hand, multilingualism in societies in Africa is not institutional, and multilingualism varies depending on the area and local inhabitants. Here, individual multilingualism begins in families and communities (cf. Ngugi, 1972; Ouane, 2009; Prah, 2009) and is seen as normal and natural. Therefore, we can clearly see the difference between multilingualism in first world countries and African contexts (Bayiga, 2016: 9). In his studies of multilingualism in Africa, Blommaert (2007) calls it the norm, with about 2550 of the approximately 7000 languages worldwide being part of language systems used in Africa.

Furthermore, researchers such as Gumperz (1971:232) and Edwards (1994:13) noted that languages spoken in more than one area or in more than one collective group are influenced by that contact and this leads to differences in how they are used in different areas or groups. In this regard, Blommaert (2007) states that such variations contribute to the difficulty of accurately counting the specific number of languages in different countries in Africa as well as in Africa as a continent. He continues that studies of multilingualism and linguistic diversity in

Africa are therefore inaccurate and "under studied", because such studies are based on the concept of fixed "pure languages" attached to specific societies or ethnic groups

Bayiga (2016:55) summarises that multilingualism is the languages that are formed and used by those whose need to communicate on different levels and for various purposes and which lead them to create complex repertoires which they can draw on in different circumstances. Bayiga calls this the central ingredient of multilingualism (Bayiga, 2016: 55).

For example, in a study of the changing multilingual landscape in the DRC's Lubumbashi province, where Kiswahili is the area's lingua franca, Kasanga (2012:53) looked specifically at graphic advertising and found that in this domain, a change is evident. For decades, graphic advertising in the DRC was ruled by French, sometimes with a little bit of Lingala or one of the other local languages. However, after the political liberation in the 1990's, ethnic and provincial nationalism exploded and led to an increase in the multilingual linguistic scene. Multilingualism in advertising has now become the norm in the DRC and national languages other than French are now used more boldly. This can be contributed to the power given to provinces that has led to the use of local languages as identity markers. Sometimes, local languages are mixed with French, but sometimes only the local language, such as Kiswahili will be used in advertising.

More relevant to this study is the increased use of English in advertising that was very rare until the mid-1990's. Especially in the larger cities, "streetwise English" is now used in names of shops, branding and naming of companies, billboards and other signs. According to Kasanga (2012: 55) "Streetwise English" can be traced back to three waves in which English was introduced in the DRC. The first and most enduring wave was when English was introduced officially into the schools. The second wave lasted about ten years and happened when English was introduced in popular dance music and started influencing an urban youth language called Indoubill. A little bit of English also started to creep into the Congolese dance music. This was an exciting time of English awakening because of contact with mostly American sporting and music stars. The third wave was when large American, South African and Australian multinational companies infiltrated the DRC. What makes the use of English in advertising in the DRC interesting is the fact that language is primarily used in advertising for purposes of persuasion. For the target audience, who has little, or no knowledge of English, Kasanga (2012: 55) notes this as a "puzzling sociolinguistic phenomenon". From these observations, Kasanga

has proposed a functional outline of how English is used in the DRC. This functional outline of the use of English includes the following five elements: 1) Achieving informational purposes, 2) Upholding an international identity, 3) Conveying a "global" stance, 4) Promoting local names and services, and 5) Projecting preferred identities.

From his research, Kasanga (2012) concludes that English as a language still is a distant choice for the vast majority of citizens of the DRC. This is despite an awareness of the status of English as the language of the modern world. Although English is used as mentioned in the contexts above, English is not flourishing as a tool of growth, like in other previously Francophone countries. Kasanga predicts that French will remain the undisputable language for quite some time and that the presence of English will stay mostly symbolic for such time. Although large corporations use English to promote them as a global brand, smaller local businesses mainly use English for the language's global symbolic authority and decorative effects (Kasanga, 2012: 66).

2.2.1 Code-switching in multilingual repertoires

The practice of code-switching also often features in the linguistic repertoires of multilinguals. Richards and Schmidt (2010: 89) defines code-switching as an alternation between two languages or language varieties and identifies it as a common linguistic practice that may occur in different forms. According to Shartiely (2016: 215) one of these forms is where a speaker speaks in one language and another speaker answers in a different language. Another form of code-switching is where a speaker starts speaking in one language and switches to another language at some point. The switch may even occur in the middle of one sentence. Moodley (2010:9), in defining code-switching, focuses on its use in multilingual educational settings and describes it as "a switch between the target language and the learner's home language and/or language that is common to all the learners". In the South African context, this would mean switching between English as the official MOI at most tertiary institutions and one of the South African indigenous languages of the specific region. The reasons for code-switching may suggest solidarity or identity amongst speakers, but may also be used for educational purposes. Shartiely (2016: 215) studied code-switching between English and Swahili during lectures at a Tanzanian university where English is the official MOI, recognising the fact that bilingual educators often use both languages in their repertoire when teaching. Such educators code-switch intentionally or unintentionally and use code-switching to ensure meaningful

participation and comprehension of students. Therefore, code-switching is used as a mechanism to assist multilingual learners in educational settings.

Rassool (2004:210) studied reasons for code-switching between multilingual speakers and noted that that code-switching takes place in various circumstances. These include when the speaker doesn't know a word in the language communicated in, when the speakers are with their family or friends, when they want to omit another person from their conversation, or when they are excited about something. Scott (2015: 41) in her study on the use of English lingua franca in tertiary classrooms in South Africa, notes that the reasons listed by Rassool (2004) could be extended to include code-switching by students in group work and classroom situations. In these contexts, code-switching may be used for different reasons including lack of English proficiency and speakers feeling that they can express themselves clearer in their home language. Lack of English proficiency can also lead to feelings of intimidation or exclusion.

In the South African context, students at tertiary institutions are multilingual individuals who have to study through the medium of English. The linguistic repertoires of these students will include English, mostly not as an L1 and will also feature some of the other 11 official South African languages. Smit (2005: 64) argues that these students will use the MOI of the tertiary institution to develop and achieve results, but that they will also use their own linguistic repertoires in the classroom through code-switching in order to participate with other students as well as lecturers in the classroom. Therefore, code-switching is used by students and lecturers in the classroom situation.

2.3 Linguistic repertoires

According to Stroud (2014: 308) most people are multilingual to a certain extent, even if they don't see themselves as multilingual. A person's linguistic repertoire include features from different languages, "whole" languages, or certain varieties of language and will depend on their background and socialization. It will even include fragments learned from watching TV, but also from a person's travels, the media or acquaintances. Stroud argues that a person will select the appropriate linguistic forms and features for each conversational context (Stroud, 2014: 308).

The concept of linguistic repertoires was introduced by Gumperz in 1964 and has been commonly accepted by different scholars to describe multilingual abilities and communication. Linguistic repertoire can be defined as an entire range of diverse, socially constrained language resources that language users apply in their daily communication (Gumperz 1971:125,152). Such a repertoire can consist of complete languages, particular genres, registers, language varieties, language styles, modalities such as reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as incomplete proficiency in certain languages (Gumperz, 1971; Blommaert, 2010). All of these elements are used with purpose to ensure communication with meaning and relevance. Gumperz believes that linguistic repertoire is more complex than just the different languages in a person's repertoire and that speaking is not only governed by rules of grammar (Gumperz, 1968). His notion of verbal repertoire includes all the different multilingual elements that are present when multilinguals participate in social situations and reveal inter alia the speakers background, class, education and attitude (Gumperz, 1968).

Bayiga (2016:68) notes the research from Myers-Scotton (1992), Duranti (1997) and Busch (2006, 2012) in which the linguistic repertoires of individuals can be linked to their connections to various communities of practice and that an individual's experiences in these communities of practice reflect in the person's linguistic repertoire. As such communities of practice change over time, a person's linguistic repertoire will also reveal the different dynamics of the resources in the new communities of practice (Bayiga, 2016:68).

Furthermore, the notion of linguistic diversity in the linguistic repertoire of multilinguals is based on the principle that languages cannot always be unmistakably separated from one another (Piller 2016: 9). Where some words are used in different countries, they can even be referred to as global words. An example is the use of the word "biltong" in a supermarket in Australia. When questioned, it is unclear whether it is an Afrikaans word, a Dutch word, German, or even Australian as it is used in Australia (Piller, 2016: 11). Piller uses the term "linguistic diversity" to describe this. Linguistic diversity shows that people use all linguistic means available in their repertoire to make communication in different contexts meaningful and that it may or may not be tied to specific conventional languages (Piller, 2016: 11).

2.3.1 Linguistic repertoire in the context of African Francophone students in South Africa

As this study is concerned with the linguistic repertoires of African Francophone students who study in English in South Africa, studies on linguistic repertoires by Kasanga (2012:48) are particularly relevant and show that the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a complex macro-linguistic environment where French is the official national language used in government, religion, business, the judiciary and media. However, there are also four national languages distributed over different regions. These languages are Chiluba, Kikongo, Kiswahili, and Lingala and are used mainly outside big cities in primary school, culture, religion and sometimes in media (Kasanga 2012: 49). Furthermore, there are estimated to be more than 200 ethnic languages (Kasanga, 2012: 50). Kasanga (2012: 49) found that linguistic repertoires in the DRC cannot be studied without keeping the multifaceted macro-sociolinguistic structure in the country in mind.

Despite its complex sociolinguistic structure, English still occupies an important place in secondary school and university in the DRC, although French is still much more popular (Kasanga, 2012: 50). The use of English is still limited and when used in workplace communication, it is only by the educated. In informal situations, English is not regularly used, as it is often viewed as arrogance or a prestige indicator. People also don't speak English in social situations, because there are constantly people present who cannot speak English. (Kasanga, 2012: 51).

In other Francophone countries such as Cameroon and Gabon, multilingualism also exists. In Cameroon, English and French are the principal languages, but the country has a total of 277 languages, with 273 of these languages being indigenous (Simons & Fennig, 2018). The Gabonese Republic has 43 individual languages, with French being the principal language (Simons & Fennig, 2018). From this data, it is evident that students in Pineteh & Mulu's (2016) study of African Francophone students who study at tertiary institutions in English have all had exposure to English in their home countries. However, it will be necessary to look more closely at the linguistic repertoires of these students to get a full understanding of the impact of L2 English as MOI on their studies and experiences while studying in South Africa.

2.4 The global power of English

When studying the field of linguistic repertoires and multilingualism, the global power of English is an element that has to be taken into account, as this is one of the main reasons why students decide to study in other countries in English. For a language to achieve the status of a global language, that language has to be accepted and used by other countries worldwide (Crystal, 2003:4). Such countries will give it a superior place in society, despite the country having no, or very few mother tongue speakers of that language. This is usually done by promoting that language as the official language of the country which is then used in official domains such as government, education and media and forces citizens to learn the language as early as possible in life. Even if that language is not the official language of the country, it can be given priority in foreign-language teaching in education (Crystal, 2003: 4). English is the most extensively taught foreign language in the world. It is taught in more than 100 countries and is mostly considered by those countries as the main foreign language in schools (Crystal, 2004: 5). A global language is one used by more people than any other language in the world. In this regard, English has achieved that status as 25 percent of the world population is, to a certain extent, proficient in English and the number keeps on growing. Crystal's research shows that no other language can contest the growth of English (Crystal, 2004: 6). Nesterenko, Ychuzhanina and Milovanova (2015: 605), for example, acknowledge English as a global language and the universal lingua franca, used internationally for communication in all spheres of life. They further note that language choice is influenced by many different factors such as demographic movement, new methods of communication, urban expansion and international markets.

Bristowe (2013: 63) found that the student participants in her research in South Africa perceived English as the lingua franca of the world on business, academic and education fronts. Bristowe's participants had positive attitudes towards English, believing that it is their "key to freedom and the wealth of the world". Montgomery (2009: 268), in turn, found that the prospects of working in international contexts outside their native countries with better financial prospects, play a role in students' decisions to study outside of their native countries in English. Students view the opportunity to study abroad, at institutions where the MOI is their L2, as preparation for their future careers (Montgomery, 2009: 268).

Despite the many challenges faced by immigrant students with regards to language when studying in another country and in an L2, students continue to use available opportunities to study in other countries. With regards to the migration of Francophone students to South Africa, a study by Pineteh and Mulu (2016) found the international status of English to be one of the motivating factors (Pineteh and Mulu 2016: 384). Worldwide changing attitudes about the use and status of English have caused citizens of the DRC, for example, to view the language more favourably. This includes viewing English as a required language in order to compete in international career opportunities. The emerging popularity of English in the DRC has led to the establishment of many private English teaching facilities since the late 1980's (Pineteh and Mulu 2016: 384). Similarly, Kasanga (2012:50) found that perceptions about English in the DRC have become more favourable in recent years. Improving one's expertise in English is now seen as increasing one's success in the international job market.

2.5 Study abroad

2.5.1 Reasons why students decide to study abroad

Tati (2010) studied the migration of students from Francophone countries in Africa to South Africa and notes that student migration is an increasing worldwide phenomenon, quoting Shen (2007) who notes that there is such an interconnectedness between education and migration that they can no longer be separated from one another. Tati (2010) found that the students from Francophone countries in Africa come to South Africa to obtain a better quality tertiary qualification than in their home countries. A study of Francophone students from Africa who come to South Africa to study shows that these students perceive universities in South Africa as affordable and a way to get an internationally recognized degree (Pineteh and Mulu 2016: 384). Tati (2010) predicts that student migration from Francophone African countries to South Africa will increase due to a breakdown or decline of quality education, as well as limited career and income opportunities in their home countries. Other reasons include the use of English as MOI at South African tertiary institutions, the availability of courses of interest and the ease of obtaining a study permit. South Africa is a choice destination for students from Francophone countries because the country has a modern infrastructure and its economy is fairly well-developed. Maybe the most important of all these factors, South African tertiary institutions, unlike universities in Western Europe generally do not require proof of English

proficiency making it attractive to students from African francophone countries who have limited or poor English proficiency. All of these reasons make South Africa a popular substitute to traditional choices such as France, the United Kingdom and Belgium (Tati, 2010: 289).

According to Lee and Rice (2007: 383), universities have realized the economic benefits of international students, as these students nearly always pay full tuition fees and thus have started recruiting international students aggressively. In the United States international students added approximately $12 billion to the economy in 2003. The United States now recognizes education as their fifth biggest service trade and is competing with Australia and Britain in this growing market. Worldwide, general reasons for student migration are the research knowledge of the universities in the host country and exposure to different cultures, languages and ways of living. These reasons can also extend to the prestige of obtaining quality education at a prestigious tertiary institution in the host country (Tati, 2010). Although this may be the case mostly in rich Western countries, students from African Francophone countries also view South Africa as a prestigious country in which to obtain a qualification of quality (Tati, 2010: 285).

Based on the internationalization of higher education, Forsey, Broomhall and Davis (2011:4) examined reasons why students from first world countries participate in studying overseas, why some students don't want to participate, perceptions of students about the value of studying in another country, their perception of the difficulties to study overseas, as well as student awareness of opportunities to study abroad. In the research done by Forsey et al (2011:4) the following findings were made: Words and phrases most used by students to explain why they would want to study overseas were "*culture, independence* and *travel broadens the mind, adventure, fun, tradition".* Students experienced "global citizenship" by personally connecting with people from other countries. Students felt that such connections could help with career advancement. Most students also reported becoming more open-minded. Students also reported an improvement in language skills (when travelling to a country where another language than a student's home language is used). Although this study was done on first world students, African Francophone students studying in South Africa may also have certain reasons which may correlate with the first world students. One of these will be an improvement of language skills in the language of the host country (in the case of students in South Africa, this will mean English as the MOI of the tertiary institution).

In a study by Kwaramba (2012: 10), regarding the internationalisation of higher education in Southern Africa, South Africa is noted as one of the top 10 destinations for foreign students who want to study outside of their home countries. Kwaramba argues that one of the main reasons for students to study at foreign universities is to increase their chances of finding employment in the host country after completion of their studies. In the South African context, the country has the largest number of public tertiary institutions of all Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries (Kwaramba, 2012: 8). These South African universities are viewed as tertiary institutions where qualifications of high quality can be acquired. In the African context, tertiary institutions in some countries, such as Zimbabwe, Angola and the DRC, have also been negatively affected by civil wars and government fragility. This has made South African tertiary institutions even more attractive to students from those countries (Kwaramba, 2012:9). Other factors which contribute to the attractiveness of South Africa as a higher education destination are the international recognition of South African universities' academic qualifications, competent academic staff and good infrastructure (Kwaramba, 2012:13).

The notion of "submersion education" can also be discussed as part of reasons why students decide to study abroad. The term submersion education is used to refer to circumstances where students have to complete their curriculum in a language that they have not mastered completely (Piller, 2016: 105). These students are learning a new language as well as course content simultaneously. While doing this should be challenging enough, it happens typically without language learning support and in the presence of fellow students who are native speakers (Piller, 2016: 105). This is typically what happens to most Francophone students at VUT where the MOI is English. These students generally arrive in South Africa with very limited English proficiency. Some of them complete an English language course before they start their studies, but even then, still find English as MOI very challenging. Although the majority of students at VUT are not English mother-tongue speakers, it has been observed that the English proficiency of South African students on campus are generally far better than the English proficiency of the Francophone students. All course content is in English and lectures are conducted in English. Although it is not official VUT practice, lecturers who can speak one of the native African languages such as Sotho, sometimes switch to the native African language during a lecture when the South African students indicate that they struggle to understand English. This practice in certain classes makes learning even more difficult for Francophone students.

Various studies have indicated the disadvantages of submersion education and the reasons for such disadvantages are obvious – students face a double task that threatens their academic performance. Although studies have shown that such students do eventually catch up, the timeframe is estimated to be between two years and nine years (Piller, 2016: 106). Many Francophone students at VUT also fail and repeat subjects because of their lack of English proficiency. Subsequently, some Francophone students don't achieve academic success and most of those who do, work much harder and often take longer to reach success.

2.5.2 Barriers experienced while studying abroad

Internationally, students who study in other countries often experience challenges. Apart from language barriers, students also face other barriers that make their study experiences difficult. Research by Pineteh and Mulu (2016: 384) on Francophone students who study in South Africa shows that these students are often socially excluded, rejected and discriminated against. In this context, social exclusion refers to the failure to join in activities and relationships available to the majority of the society, whether it is political, economic, cultural or social and which influence the quality of life of those who are excluded (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:388). This exclusion lead to Francophone students withdrawing from social interactions with South African students. Their self-esteem is also negatively affected (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:393). The differences in cultures also lead to these students being excluded. In this regard, the Francophone students especially mention differences in views on respect, as well as differences in social and classroom behaviour. Francophone students feel that South African students do not have respect for their lecturers. Local students' behaviour, values and beliefs are often seen as unacceptable and cause culture shock. Francophone students also don't like to work with South African students in class and group work because they perceive South African students to be lazy and always have excuses why they cannot work (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:396). From this data, it can be seen that Francophone students' perceptions about South Africans have also influenced their ability to adapt here. In this regard, the argument of Chetri (1980) in Pineteh and Mulu (2016: 397), that the process of adapting in a new country is a two-way process, involving both the people from the host country as well as the migrants, must be kept in mind. The Francophone students' culture shock and need for belonging often affect their interactions with local people.

In a study by Ralarala, Pineteh and Mchiza ((2016: 244) on the language and socio-cultural challenges experienced by international students at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), various socio-cultural difficulties of the mostly African Francophone international students at CPUT, were identified. These difficulties stemmed from their lack of English proficiency, coupled with social and cultural differences. The study argues that there is a definite relationship between lack of English proficiency and socio-cultural difficulties. The Francophone students reported struggling to integrate and interact with other students. They feel that South African students look down on them because of their origin and laugh at their pronunciation when they have to do presentations in class. Their lack of English competency makes it difficult for them to socialise with South African students. In group work, they are likely to be excluded. They expressed frustration at always struggling and reported that South African students often speak indigenous South African languages to one another leading to negative feelings of exclusion. The study found that the international students experienced the university as an unfriendly location creating feelings of hostility and social separation. From these findings, this study proposed diagnostic admission tests for international students at CPUT which can determine the English language support required. Furthermore, it was proposed that academic and support staff at the institution recognise and integrate the linguistic and cultural profiles of international students, arguing that it would help with the acceptance of these students and create greater awareness of cultural differences that, in turn, would lead to social inclusivity and cultural assimilation. Lastly, the study proposed that support staff and academic staff be educated on intercultural communication so as to practically address challenges the international students face on linguistic and socio-cultural level.

In another study by Weber (2016: 193) on experiences and perceptions of international students from Africa at the residences of a South African tertiary institution, the research focussed on the social relationships between the South African and international students. It found discrimination by South African students against the international students and a challenging institutional milieu. The international students described the institution as an isolated and unfriendly space. The residence environment was reported as not having any sense of community where students don't care about each other. International students mostly reported strain in the social relationships between the South African and international students, with South African students feeling that international students will take job opportunities away from them. These challenges were endured by international students for the sake of their future goals

but their silence about the institutional challenges they face, does not mean that they embrace them.

Lee and Rice (2010) argue that the challenges that international students face to adapt to a new language and culture cause emotional and sociocultural difficulty and can impact the quality of their educational performance and social lives. In a study of international students in the United States, Xu (1991: 557) found other factors that also have a negative impact on these students. Personal and financial problems, social problems, such as being accepted or rejected, and academic problems, such as language barriers and academic task completion, were found to be among the problems international students struggle with. Boyer and Sedlacek (cited in Xu, 1991:557) found that international students in the United States experience many difficulties such as personal problems, social problems and academic problems. Academic problems include inadequate English proficiency, finishing different academic tasks and finding out what is expected of them. However, research by Forsey, Broomhall and Davis (2011: 5) in Australia about study abroad programs to England, Japan and the United States found it to mostly be a positive experience for students. The students in this study enjoyed experiencing other cultures and people and the word "fun" was often used to describe the experience. These students also felt that they have become global citizens as they came into contact with people from all over the world (Forsey et al 2011: 8). It must however be noted that the students in Forsey's study view the experience of studying in another country as a type of "academic tourism". It is therefore different from the migration of the Francophone students to South African tertiary institutions where the students are mostly forced to study in another country to obtain a quality tertiary qualification.

Research by Tullock (2019) on study abroad education indicates a great amount of variability in terms of students' experiences, especially with regards to their contact with the people of the host country, the social networks they create and their ability to cope with trials experienced. The research has furthermore indicated that many students experience various internal and external obstacles and enablers to involvement in local societies. Examples include some being helped and welcomed in the hosting community and others experiencing indifference or resentment. Some students experience discrimination because of race or gender, some become actively involved in local communities and others only keep to social networks of a fellow group of students, or online communication with friends and family in their home countries. Students also experience identity-associated conflicts as they struggle to create ways to

communicate in a new language and as they come across different cultural norms which may clash with their own. Many students who study abroad are successful in overcoming the challenges they face, although many are also unsuccessful and remove themselves from all possible interaction with people from the host country and regularly assume ethnocentric attitudes (Tullock, 2019:16).

Tullock (2019: 17) also found that all study abroad learners are to a certain degree multilingual or at least bilingual. Tullock further notes that nowadays study abroad learners, more than ever, display varied multilingual profiles and contributes this to increasing contemporary globalisation that has subsequently led to increased numbers of multilingual, transnational learners in higher education, as well as an increase in participation by students in study abroad programs. Examples of such increased participation are on the one hand skilled multilingual foreign language students and on the other hand students who speak minority languages from ethnic, migrant, and other multinational backgrounds (Tullock, 2019: 17).

2.5.3 Language barriers experienced while studying abroad

As the English language proficiency of Francophone students studying in English at tertiary institutions in South Africa is necessarily restricted, English is a definite barrier for these students during their academic life in South Africa. In this regard Piller (2016: 131) notes that even the most capable multilinguals will have a more limited proficiency that native speakers of a language. Furthermore, such limited proficiency in the specific language will lead to lack of participation and can even result in isolation.

Inadequate English proficiency does not act as a deterrent for Francophone students moving to South Africa to study (Tati, 2010). However, English language proficiency causes difficulty for these students. Pineteh and Mulu (2016: 393) observe that many Francophone students studying at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) reported feeling excluded because of their insufficient English language skills in lecture situations. The study participants felt that other students questioned their intellect because of their lack of English proficiency and rejected them because of it. Those who are unable to interact with other students and lecturers, are excluded and experience discrimination. The students report that they are mocked by South African students, calling them stupid because of their inadequate English language skills and

accents when participating in academic activities. In this sense, the attitude of the South African students have a negative psychological impact on the Francophone students' self-esteem and their willingness to interact in an education environment (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016: 393). This also causes fear and feelings of intimidation in Francophone students and force them into a "silent mode" which in turn leads to a mistaken belief that these students are unwilling to take part in lecture discussions and that they are lacking in academic skills such as critical thinking (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:394). Furthermore, this leads to some lecturers having a negative view of Francophone students which impact negatively on how these students' projects are assessed. Many Francophone students also find a general lack of a supportive learning environment to create problems for them. When students go to lecturers because they don't understand something, they are often turned away and told to ask their friends, or to go and read the brief. When the student then fails a test, the lecturer will blame the student's language ability (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016: 394).

In Ralarala et al's (2016: 244) study at CPUT, lecturers who were interviewed reported on the language challenges of the international students, who are mostly African Francophones. The challenges mentioned were in relation to the students' academic performance, communication, and task execution. These included struggling to respond in communication contexts because of limited vocabulary, struggling with writing and speaking in assignments and presentations and completing forms. The students who were interviewed in this study also indicated language challenges to be one of the most serious elements that they have to overcome. This included difficulty in communication with lecturers where international students struggle to find the right words to explain their problems to lecturers. Furthermore, understanding the material content is a challenge and international students try to translate content to form understanding. In this regard the students also reported lecturers speaking too fast and struggling to understand the lecturer's accent. The study also found a need amongst lecturers and international students who were interviewed for language support of international students at CPUT. Such support proposed the use of tutors and faculty-based writing centres.

Another language barrier that can be experienced by international students while studying abroad is code-switching. As earlier defined in this chapter, code-switching happens when a speaker uses more than one language in communication. Although code-switching is often positively viewed as a mechanism to assist multilingual learners in educational contexts, code-switching is also a language barrier for international students.

Research from different scholars has found that L2 English students struggle to study in English and achieve academic success, not only in South Africa, but internationally. In a South African context, Kapp (1998:22) found that studying in an L2 can be a major factor in the achievement of academic success or failure and lists frustration and a sense of powerlessness among the L2 English students in the classroom situation as reasons for this. Young (1995:66) adds that an L2 as MOI could be the deciding factor in the ability of students to succeed academically. Internationally, this has been confirmed in a study done by Xu (1991:567) in the United States where English proficiency was found to have the biggest influence on international students' academic success. According to Xu (1991: 558) research has consistently found inadequate language proficiency to be one of the major factors that affects academic achievement of international students. Furthermore, inadequate language proficiency also affects these students' social adjustment that in turn has a negative impact on their academic success. In a study by Yeh (2014:305) in Taiwan, it was also found that students' learning difficulties could be attributed to their lack of English proficiency. Xu (1991: 567) also found that students' self-perceptions of English language proficiency is the biggest indicator of academic success. Students who believe that their English is good enough to achieve academic success, experience less academic problems than those students who believe that their English is not good enough. Other indicators are the length of prior English training and the age of the students. Lee and Rice (2007) also found that language and cultural adjustment challenges have a negative impact on international students' academic performance and their social lives.

Studies have indicated that students from developing countries experience many more difficulties that Western European students with regards to language and that it hinders their academic progress (Lee and Rice, 2007: 385). Lee and Rice (2007: 385) also looked at a study done by Robertson in Australia. In this study, language ranked as one of the most serious problems faced by international students. It was found that because of international students' sensitivity about their language abilities, they don't ask for help when they need it. When academic staff were surveyed, their most important concern was with the language ability of the international students. However, the staff survey also showed lack of empathy for the language problems faced by these students. In a study by Beoku-Betts (2004) of African female scientists at Western universities, it was found that lecturers often criticized their accents. These students' ability to do the work was questioned and they were asked to take remedial classes, leading to these students feeling excluded because of lecturers' prejudices. Although the

researcher acknowledged the role of race and gender, their linguistic competence also played a role (Lee and Rice 2007: 386).

In an Australian context, Andrade (2006) examined correlations between English proficiency, social adjustment and academic success. Here it was found that not only English proficiency impacts students' academic success. Other elements that play a role are how students evaluate themselves, assessment tools used by the tertiary institution and students' own motivation or lack thereof to learn (Andrade (2006). Gill, (2007: 169) in a study of Chinese postgraduate students at a British university found that academics identified language inadequacy in academic and social contexts to be one of the most difficult issues in working with these students. However, from the perspective of the Chinese students, they were struggling with the English language, not only in daily communication, but they also had to cope with using English in academic contexts with specialist terminology (Gill, 2007: 172).

2.5.4 Attempts to overcome barriers

In the case of the Francophone students studying in South Africa, studies have found that these students generally look for friendship from other foreigners, which then become their new social network, and which gives them a sense of belonging and community. These foreigners usually have the same language and culture. This makes them more resilient and helps them to cope with the rejection they face from the South African students. However, these coping mechanisms only complicate their adaption. For these students to really adapt in the new academic environment, they actually need to interact with South African students on a social and academic level. (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:399). In academic life the Francophone students in South Africa prefer working with other foreigners instead of South African students. Many of the Francophone students "survive" their academic life in South Africa by continuously picturing their return to their home countries after graduation (Pineteh and Mulu, 2016:388).

Research by Gill (2007), showed that Chinese students in Britain adapted better when they participated in a network of different relationships. These students had a "home network" with other Chinese students who study at the university. These students supported one another emotionally and when they experienced feelings of loneliness. This often included sharing student accommodation with other Chinese students where they give one another moral and

emotional support. These students also formed “work relationships” with other overseas students where they worked together to understand academic tasks better (Gill, 2007: 174). Once they established these home and work relationships, it was easier for them to become involved in limited other relationships with other cultures and people of the host country, thereby overcoming many of the barriers they would experience without such networks.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides a background to the theoretical considerations and the various fields in which the study is contextualised. It forms the foundation of analysing and examining the research data that will be collected for this study. The following chapter will discuss the research methodology used in collecting the data necessary for the study.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the qualitative methodological approach that was followed to collect and analyse the data used in this study. Firstly, I will give information about the study participants. This will include how they were recruited, as well as their background. Thereafter, the data collection instruments will be discussed as well as the manner in which the language portraits were analysed. Data collection was done through online methods to comply with government protocols of social distancing and lockdown because of the Covid-19 pandemic. A description of how the data was categorized and analysed will also be included. The analytical methodology comprised a thematic analysis of the data collected in order to answer the research questions. I will close this chapter with a short discussion of the ethical considerations relating to this study.

3.2 The research participants

3.2.1 Recruitment of the research participants

The aim of this study is to study the linguistic repertoires of African Francophone students who previously had French as MOI at school and who are currently studying at tertiary level in English in South Africa, as well as their reasons for doing so. In order to collect the data to answer the research questions as set out in chapter 1, I recruited African Francophone students whose first language (L1) is French and who are studying in South Africa at VUT. The students are studying towards various degrees and diplomas at VUT.

I am a lecturer in one of the compulsory subjects for all students at VUT, namely Applied Communication Skills. The participants were identified by means of a student language background questionnaire (see Appendix A) that is given to all students in my classes in the subject Applied Communication Skills at the beginning of each new semester. This questionnaire helps me to create a better understanding of the linguistic repertoire of my students in general, and so was ideal for identifying potential participants for the current study. For the purpose of the recruitment, three additional questions were added to the questionnaire

at the beginning of semester one of 2020 and South African students were asked to ignore those questions.

After receiving ethical clearance and institutional permission to conduct the study, I approached the potential participants who were identified through the student language background questionnaire, through email (see Appendix D). Participants could not be approached personally due to the social distancing restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The email requested possible participants to partake in the study. Informed consent forms in both English (see Appendix E) and French (see Appendix F), were also sent to potential participants as attachments to the email. The email explained what would be required of participants in the study and assured them that their participation was voluntary, there would be no negative repercussions for their involvement in the study, or if they chose not to participate, and that they would be able to withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences. Participants who agreed to participate in the study, informed me of their decision by signing the informed consent document which was then e-mailed back to me. A total of 12 students were recruited. Although 12 participants in total were recruited and participated in the research, not all participants completed all the data collection instruments. From the 12 participants, 10 questionnaires were completed, nine language portraits were received and eight participants were interviewed.

3.2.2 Background of the research participants

As noted in the introductory chapter, there is a growing trend among African Francophone students whose MOI at school was French, to migrate to South Africa to further their tertiary studies at South African tertiary institutions were English is the MOI. However, the English language proficiency of most of these students is well below average. These low levels of English proficiency have a negative impact on the academic success of these students. The participants who were recruited for the study are mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). One French-speaking participant from Gabon was also recruited. The official language in both the DRC and Gabon is French. Furthermore, the MOI in both primary and secondary school in these countries is French. The linguistic repertoires of the participants from the DRC included French, Swahili, Lingala, Chiluba and English, while the linguistic repertoires of the participants from Gabon included French, Punu, Guisir and English.

3.3 Data collection instruments

3.3.1 Student language background questionnaire

As previously indicated, participants were identified by means of a student language background questionnaire (see Appendix A). I hand out these questionnaires to all students at the beginning of each semester to assist me in forming a general idea of the background and linguistic repertoires of all the students in my classes. I find this information useful in tailoring lectures to create the best possible learning experience for students. Before the questionnaires are handed out to students, I take the time to explain its rationale to students. In the student language background questionnaires, information is obtained about the student's country of origin, home language, other languages in their repertoires, schools attended, MOI in the schools attended, other languages taught in school and the age of first exposure to English. Completion of these questionnaires is always voluntarily. The data gathered in the student language background questionnaire completed by the participants was used to answer research question one. Thus it assisted me in creating a better understanding of the linguistic repertoires of the participants.

3.3.2 Language portraits

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing protocols, language portrait data (see Appendix B for the language portrait silhouette used in this study) was collected online using an application called *Photo to Colouring Book*. This is an application that participants could download for free on their smart phones/devices. Language portraits were used together with the student language background questionnaires to answer research question one, as they provided further data about students' linguistic repertoires. In research, language portraits are effectively used as a multimodal method to create language biographies. A language portrait is a body silhouette sketch where the participants are asked to use different colours to colour in the body silhouette, indicating the different languages in their repertoires (Busch, 2012:8). The *Photo to Colouring Book* application allows you to convert an image to a black and white drawing. The user can then add colours to the drawing by using the application's painting tools. I sent the participants the body silhouette image via e-mail or WhatsApp. The participants then downloaded the *Photo to Colouring Book* application and uploaded the image of the body silhouette sketch as a black and white image. The participants were then able to add colours to

colour-in the body silhouette sketch. Participants submitted the language portrait by sending a screenshot of the finished sketch back to me using WhatsApp. If participants preferred, they could also submit the language portrait via e-mail. During the individual interviews, I was able to obtain further information about the participants' language portraits as questions were posed to participants to explain their language portraits.

3.3.3 Individual interviews

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing protocols instituted by the South African government, individual interviews (see Appendix C for the interview schedule) were held using online methods such as MS Teams or Skype, depending on what was convenient or available to each participant. The interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards. At the start of the individual interviews, participants were again given the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns. The rationale of the study was explained to participants again. When the questions started, participants were firstly asked to provide feedback about their language portraits that were submitted to me prior to the interview. The language portraits provided data about the participants' linguistic repertoires and assisted in answering research question one. The feedback provided about the language portraits during the individual interviews furthermore provided data about how the participants view the different languages in their repertoires.

Interviews were held with eight participants who were identified as being from African Francophone countries and who previously had French as MOI at school. The data gathered from the interviews was used to answer research questions two, three and four. Thus, the interviews provided data about the reasons why multilingual students from African Francophone countries decide to study in English in South Africa, their experiences while studying in South Africa in English and the barriers they face.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Thematic research analysis as a methodology

As this research is of a sociolinguistic nature, I decided to use a thematic analysis. Thematic research analysis is a method used to find themes (patterns of meaning) and recognise

reoccurring patterns, topics and ideas through systematic organising of data and focusing on the meaning in the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2012:2). It is often used to reveal problems, concerns, variances and similarities in data. By using thematic research analysis, I could identify collective experiences and themes in the data and make sense of those themes. These themes deliver a fuller representation of the topic that is investigated (Hawkins, 2018: 2). Therefore, I needed to look at the collective dataset and its themes and not at unique individual data items. Furthermore, identified themes are only important if they relate to the research questions and topics of research. Analysis of the themes should therefore provide answers to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2012:2). For this study, I used the six step approach to thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2012: 5). The six steps include the following: 1) Familiarising yourself with the data, 2) Generating initial codes, 3) Searching for themes, 4) Reviewing potential themes, 5) Defining and naming themes and 6) Producing the report. Furthermore, an inductive approach was used to locate themes within the data. This meant that themes were identified and constructed directly from the data that I was working with (the verbatim transcriptions of individual interviews). An inductive approach refers to the fact that no earlier theoretical frameworks were used to lead and control the research project (Hawkins, 2018: 2).

3.4.1.1 Student language background questionnaires

A Student language background questionnaire (Appendix A) of students at VUT, identified as from African Francophone countries, was used as the primary recruitment criterion for participants of this study as it assisted me in identifying students who come from African Francophone countries. From the questionnaires handed out, I received back 11 completed questionnaires from African Francophone students and from the 11 questionnaires, 10 could be approached as potential participants who met the requirements. The data collected from the questionnaires were used, together with the language portraits to form an understanding of the linguistic repertoires of the African Francophone students studying at VUT.

3.4.1.2 Language portraits

Language portraits (see Appendix B) were also used to answer research question one, as they provided further data about students' linguistic repertoires. From the language portraits that were sent to the participants, I received back nine completed language portraits. Further

information regarding the participants' language portraits were collected during the individual interviews.

According to De Jager, Tewson, Ludlow & Boydell (2016:5) body mapping (used for language portraits), has the benefit of drawing participants' attention to their bodies. In the case of language portraits, it draws their attention to the way they feel about the languages in their repertoire. The body mapping process inspires the participants to become more aware of and reflect on the languages in their repertoire where other research methods tend to disregard the physical, emotional and sensory extent of the role that different languages play in a person's life. Using a creative process to collect data allows a researcher to gain access to experiences that cannot necessarily be accessed with interviews. Where participants use body mapping, such as with language portraits, they are actively involved and make decisions about how to characterize their languages in a personal way. It also allows participants to reflect more deeply on the languages in their repertoire.

Language portraits have been used for more than 25 years in educational settings for purposes of reflecting on language and to encourage sensitivity in working with multilingualism. However, in the last few years, language portraits have also been used more and more as a tool in research. This was after the Research Group Spracherleben1 [lived experience of language] at the University of Vienna started using them. As a research tool, language portraits have been found to be effective in answering questions regarding a "lived experience of language" (Busch 2018:2). Research on the effectiveness of language portraits as a research tool by Busch (2018) found that it is a creative research method drawing on image as well as language. It can present languages in a conversational form and it can present languages as images where symbols play a role in the understanding of languages. Furthermore, language portraits provide data regarding the whole linguistic repertoire of a speaker, as well as the relationship of the different languages within a speaker's repertoire. Busch (2018: 11) found that the language portrait evokes an emotional dimension to language, because of the reference to a body in the silhouette, making it a comprehensive research tool in the study of linguistic repertoire.

3.4.1.3 Individual interviews

As noted above, interviews were held with eight recruited participants. The data gathered in the individual interviews was analysed using thematic data analysis methodology. Firstly, I

transcribed the interviews verbatim and then studied the transcribed texts and made notes. My aim was to become closely familiar with the data and to notice aspects that might be relevant to my research questions. Thereafter, I started analysing the data systematically, through coding. I used codes to identify and label the data that I found to be possibly important to the research questions. The codes assisted me in finding patterned answers or meaning in the data which led me to the creation, naming, defining and in-depth analysis of the themes. Furthermore, I had to ensure that I revisited the data regularly throughout my analysis to make sure that I drew the correct understanding from the data and that it contributed to answering the research questions. The inductive approach that was used meant that themes were identified and constructed directly from the data that I was working with (the verbatim transcriptions of individual interviews).

3.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance for conducting the study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities of Stellenbosch University (number GENL-2020-9560) and from the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee of the VUT (number CREC-01-10-2020-8.4).

As stated above, student language background questionnaires were handed out in class. The rationale behind completing the questionnaire was explained in class. Hereafter, students had a choice whether or not to complete the questionnaire. During my explanation of the rationale of the questionnaire, I emphasised that students would not in any way be penalised if they did not want to complete the questionnaires. Possible participants for the study were identified from the completed student language background questionnaires. Such identified possible participants were contacted via e-mail and invited to take part in the study. Identified participants who did not respond to the e-mail invitation were not sent any reminders. This was to ensure that no participant felt obliged to participate in the study. The email addresses of possible participants were available to me through the student language background questionnaires.

Informed consent forms, in both English and French, were sent as attachments to the e-mail. The email explained what would be required of participants in the study. The informed consent forms assured participants that participation in the study was voluntary and that there would be no negative repercussions for their involvement in the study. It also made it clear to participants

that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences. Furthermore, it informed participants that they could refuse to answer questions that they felt uncomfortable with. Participants were also guaranteed that there were no identifiable risks or discomforts associated with participation in the study. Those identified who agreed to participate, signed the consent form and sent it back to me via e-mail. This served as written consent to participate in the study.

All participants were assigned a pseudonym and the names of the participants were only available to me and my supervisor (as stated in the consent form) in order to ensure anonymity. Participants were assured that when the findings of the study are reported in the form of a thesis and/or journal article, any reference to the participant would be made in such a manner that the participant would not be identifiable to the readers. Participants were also assured that if they decided to withdraw from the study at any time, the data that had already been collected from them would not be used as part of the research findings and that the data already collected from them would be deleted and/or destroyed.

Chapter 4: Results and analysis

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the results of the data collection from the 12 participants who come from Francophone countries in Africa and who study in English at the Vaal University of Technology. As mentioned in chapter 3, although 12 participants in total were recruited and participated in the research, not all participants took part in all the data collection opportunities and instruments. Some participants did not complete the questionnaires, while others did not submit the language portraits and only eight participants were interviewed. The first dataset, presented in section 4.3, consists of the student language background questionnaires as discussed in chapter 3, of 10 participants who completed the questionnaires. I used this data to establish the linguistic repertoires of African Francophone students who come to South Africa to study in English. This was used to answer research question one. The questionnaire also provided data regarding participants' first exposure to English outside of school. Furthermore, the questionnaire revealed which participants completed an English language course before commencement of their studies. The linguistic repertoires are also evident in the language portraits of the participants as discussed in chapter 3. Nine language portraits were completed by participants. The language portraits have been included in this chapter and will be discussed in section 4.4. In addition to the questionnaires and language portraits, individual interviews (see Appendix C for the interview schedule) were conducted with eight participants. The interview data was analysed thematically, as described in the methodology chapter, to answer the other research questions of the study. The interview data includes African Francophone students' reasons for coming to South Africa to study in English, their experiences of studying in English, their barriers to study in South Africa and how they overcome these barriers, or not.

4.2 Characterisation of the participants

The participants of this study are all Francophone students from African countries who came to South Africa after they finished high school to study at VUT towards a tertiary qualification. From the 12 participants, 11 are from the DRC and one is from Gabon. The DRC participants come from different cities and regions in the country. The MOI at school for all the participants was French. The MOI at VUT is English. From conducting the individual interviews, I found varying proficiency among the participants. The fields of study of the participants at VUT

include Engineering, Analytical Chemistry, Biotechnology and Sport Management. The participants do not reside in VUT residences, but in private accommodation around the area of the campus. In general, foreign students who study at VUT stay with other foreign students in private student accommodation. Some foreign students may stay with family that they have in the area, or brothers and sisters who also study at VUT.

4.3 Linguistic repertoires of participants: questionnaire data

Table 4.1 presents a summary of the data elicited from the questionnaire, specifically with regard to the number of languages in participants' linguistic repertoires, age of first exposure to English outside the classroom and whether participants completed an English course before commencement of study at VUT.

Participant	**Number of languages in repertoire**	**Age of first exposure to English outside school**	**Students who did an English language course before commencement of study at VUT**	
			√: Yes	Duration
			X: No	Months
P1	**5**	**15**	**X**	-
P2	**4**	**16**	√	12
P3	**4**	**13**	√	12
P4	**4**	**15**	√	12
P6	**5**	**15**	√	1
P7	**4**	**14**	√	12
P8	**4**	**14**	√	12
P9	**4**	**19**	√	9
P11	**3**	**16**	**X**	-
P12	**3**	**10**	√	3
Min	**3**	**10**		
Max	**5**	**19**		
Median	**4**	**15**	**8 (total)**	**12**

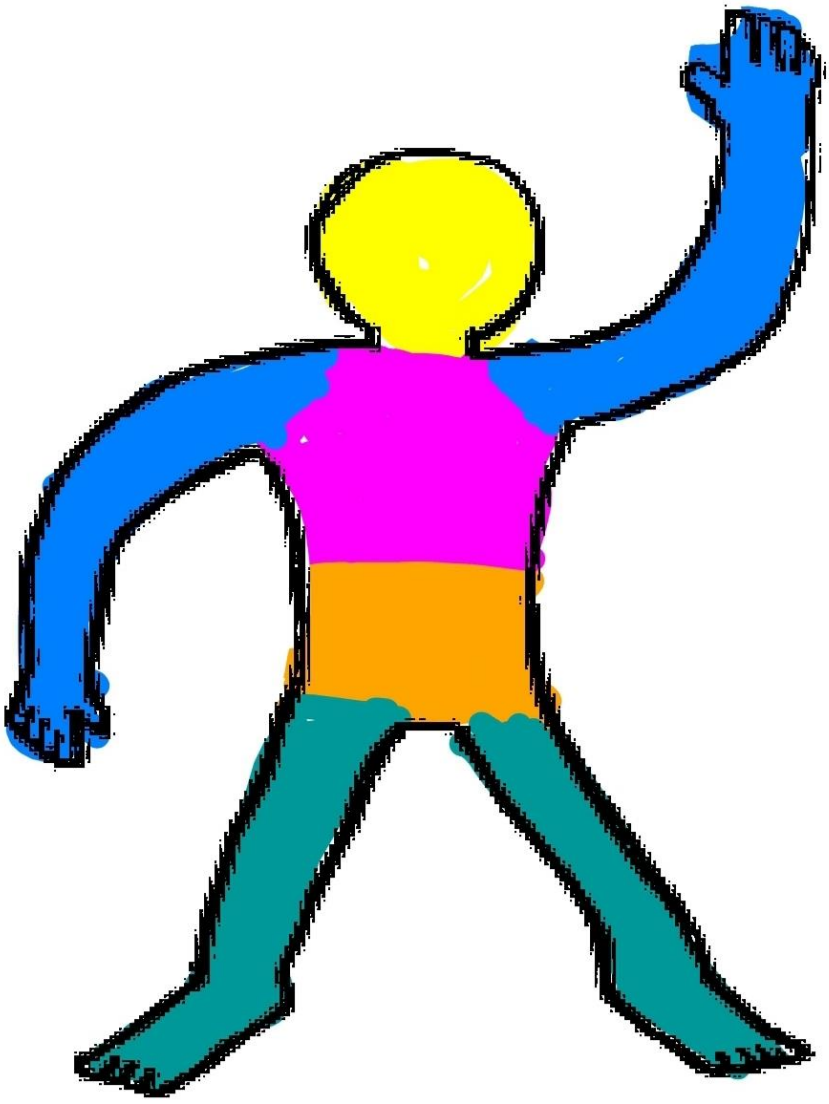
Table 4.1: Number of languages in linguistic repertoires and exposure to English outside of school

From this data, it is evident that all participants are multilingual and speak a median of four languages. The official language in school for all participants was French. All participants had English as a subject in high school, but from interview data, participants reported that they did not find the subject beneficial and that they could not really speak the language after completion of high school. The participants' exposure to English outside the context of school was also recorded. The median age when they were exposed to English was 15 years. The oldest age of exposure was at 19 years and the earliest age of exposure was when the participant was 10 years old. The questionnaire also elicited information on which participants completed an English language course before commencing their studies in English at VUT and included the duration of such a course. The data revealed that 8 participants completed an English language course before commencing their studies with the median course duration of being one year.

4.4 Linguistic repertoires of participants: language portrait data

The language portrait data will be discussed in this section. All participants' language portraits are given here and a short summary of the data collected from each participant with regards to their language portraits in the interviews are given under each language portrait. This section concludes with some remarks on all the language portrait data.

Figure 4.1: P1 Language portrait



Colour	Language
Pink	French
Blue	Lingala
Orange	Chiluba
Green	Swahili
Yellow	English

Participant 1 indicated that the colour yellow represents the head, because currently, during her studies and time in South Africa, she has to use English to think. When answering a question, she has to think in English and answer, write or speak in English. She finds this difficult because English is not the language she is used to think in. She is used to thinking in French and she can speak French without having to think. French was indicated as the colour pink on the language portrait as the participant described French as her heart and the language that she

loves. The participant's home language, her mother tongue, is Chiluba which was the first language she could speak and which she uses when she speaks to her parents and close family. Blue represents the language Lingala and green represents Swahili. The participant learned these two languages when she was approximately 10 years old. She uses these languages when she communicates with people from other regions in the DRC. She also uses Lingala and Swahili in the VUT campus context when communicating with other Francophone students from the DRC.

Figure 4.2: P3 Language Portrait

Colour	Language
Green	French
Black	English
Yellow	Guisir
Blue	Punu

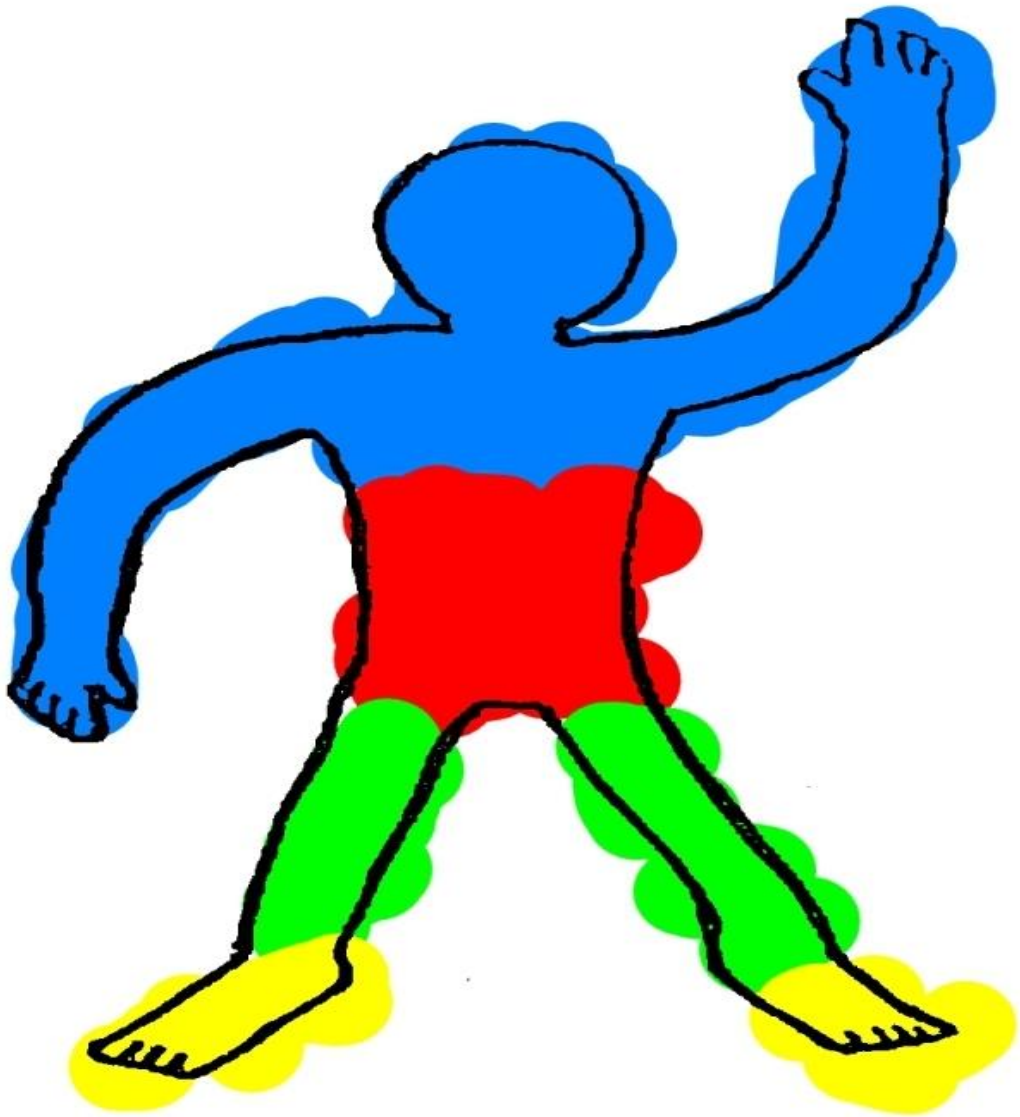
Participant 3 was the only person in the study who comes from Gabon. She used the colours of the national flag of her country to complete her language portrait. The colour green is indicated as French because she feels that it is the language that she speaks best. However, the colour yellow represents Guisir and the colour blue represents Punu, the two indigenous languages of Gabon that she speaks. Although French was indicated as the language that she speaks best, she indicated Guisir and Punu as her mother tongue and the languages she speaks in her home. Guisir is the language she speaks with her father and Punu is the language she speaks with her mother. When asked why she indicated French as the language she speaks best, she indicated that it is the most widely used language in her country. Guisir and Punu are only spoken in her home. Black was used to indicate English and it also symbolises the difficulty of English for her.

Figure 4.3: P6 Language Portrait

Colour	Language
Blue	French
Red	English
Black	Swahili
Yellow	Lingala
White	Zulu

For participant 6, the colour blue represents French and fills the head, shoulders and arms of the body. She indicated French in this way because it is the language in which she thinks and writes and the language she used for academic purposes in school. Under the blue, the chest was indicated as red, representing English. The participant's reason for indicating English as the chest is because it is now the core of her life and she cannot get away from it. She also expressed her loved for the English language and the fact that it can open new opportunities for her. The colour black indicated her mother tongue, Swahili, but she indicated it below English because English is more important for her at the moment. Yellow represents Lingala and is only used to speak to friends who cannot speak Swahili well. This participant also started learning Zulu in South Africa, but finds it difficult to learn. Her reason for learning Zulu is because she indicated that she would like to stay in South Africa after she finished her studies.

Figure 4.4: P7 Language Portrait

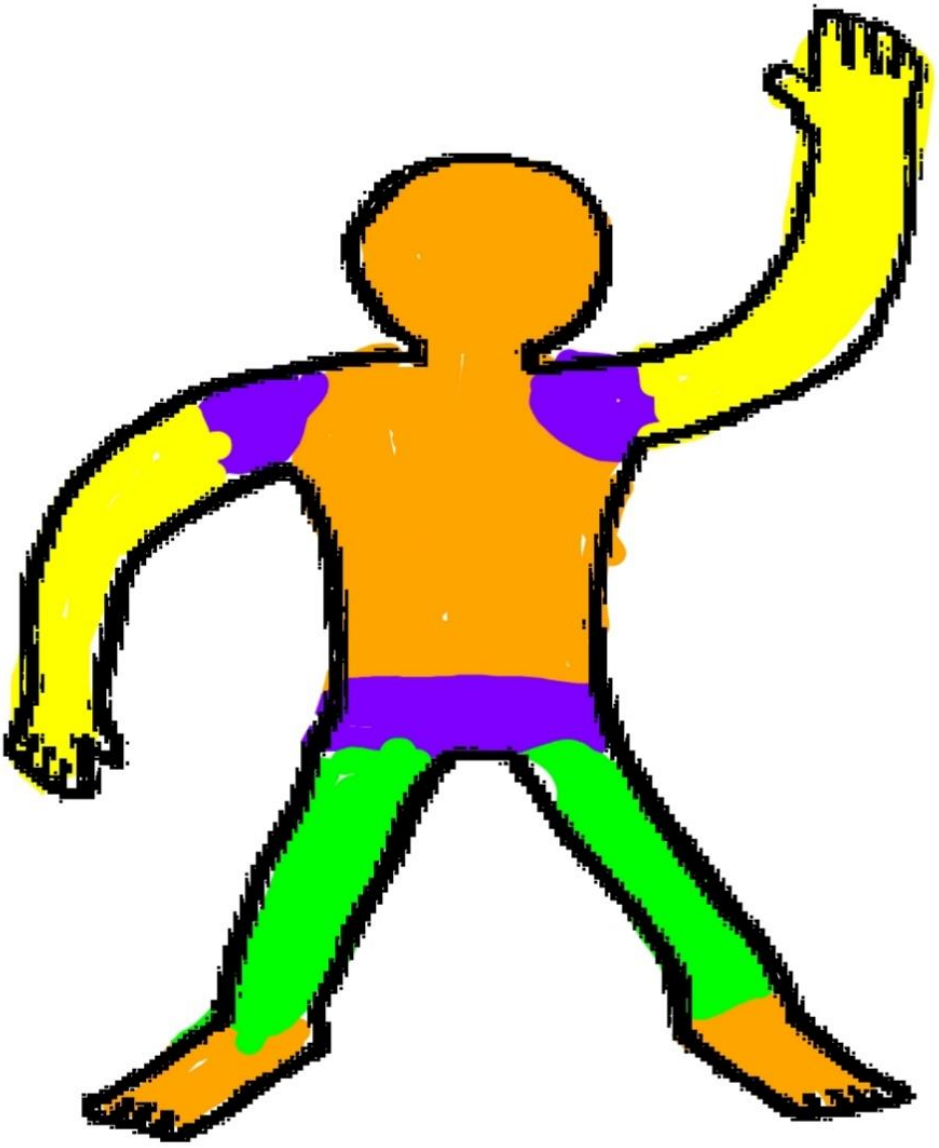


Colour	Language
Blue	French
Red	Swahili
Green	English
Yellow	Lingala

Participant 7 also used blue to indicate French. It covered the head, arms, hands and upper part of the chest. He felt that French should cover this part of the body because the head is a very important part. He indicated that he speaks French every day and that it is the most important language to him. French is also this participant's mother tongue. Swahili was indicated as the middle part, as that is the language that is spoken in the town Katanga where the participant comes from and, in Katanga, people speak Swahili and use the language when doing business.

English was indicated as green in the legs. The participant feels that English can take him places and bring opportunities, but he still struggles to speak English. The colour yellow in the feet is used to indicate Lingala, as it is a language he only uses when speaking to friends.

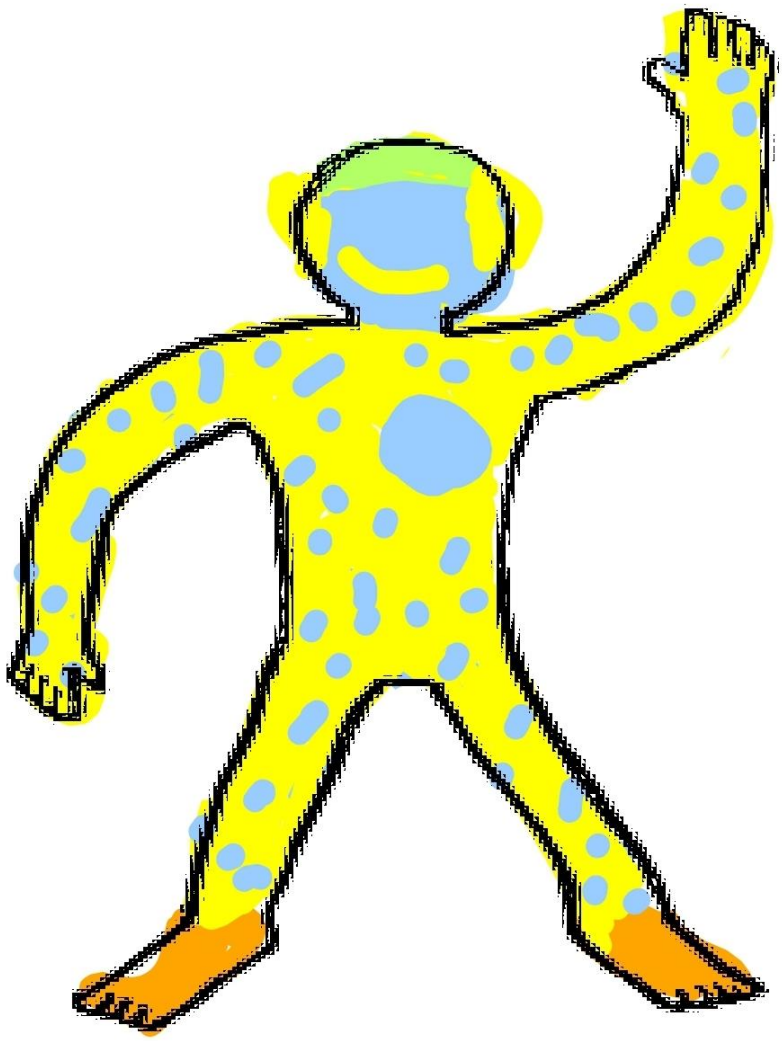
Figure 4.5: P8 Language Portrait



Colour	Language
Purple	Swahili
Yellow	Lingala
Green	French
Orange	English

Participant 8 used orange to represent English. The head was coloured orange because she uses English daily in academic activities and to think. The middle and feet also represents English as she feels that it will open up a new world and can take her to new places. In contrast with English, French was indicated as green in the legs. According to the participant, English must "go up" (move forward) and French "must go down" (become less important). The reason for this is that, in order to pursue her dreams, she has to use more English and less French. The purple in the shoulders and middle of the body represents Swahili, as it is her home language. She described her home language as being the centre and "holding her up". The colour yellow represents Lingala in her hands because she can use Lingala to do things, such as socialise with friends.

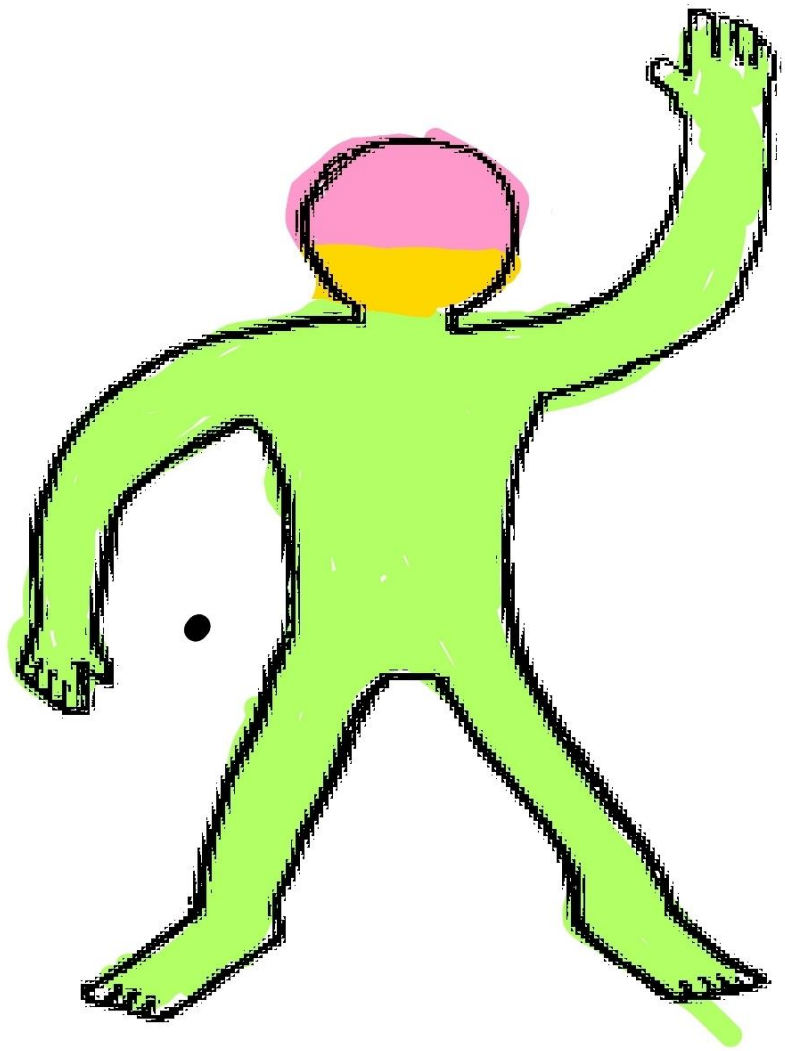
Figure 4.6: P9 Language Portrait



Colour	Language
Blue	Lingala
Yellow	French
Green	English
Orange	Swahili

In this language portrait, the participant indicated the colour yellow as French and used it to colour almost the whole body, because everyone in the DRC speaks French and it is the official language. French was also the language he used in academic settings in school. For that reason, the mouth and ears are also indicated in yellow because in school, the participant listened and spoke in French. Over the yellow, the blue represents Lingala, because Lingala is the participant's home language and he loves the language. He uses Lingala whenever he gets an opportunity. Only the top part of the head (the brain) was coloured green to indicate English because the student now uses English in his academic life. However, he does not see English as a part of who he is. Finally, the colour orange was used to show Swahili as his feet because he doesn't use it much, but can speak the language when he has to.

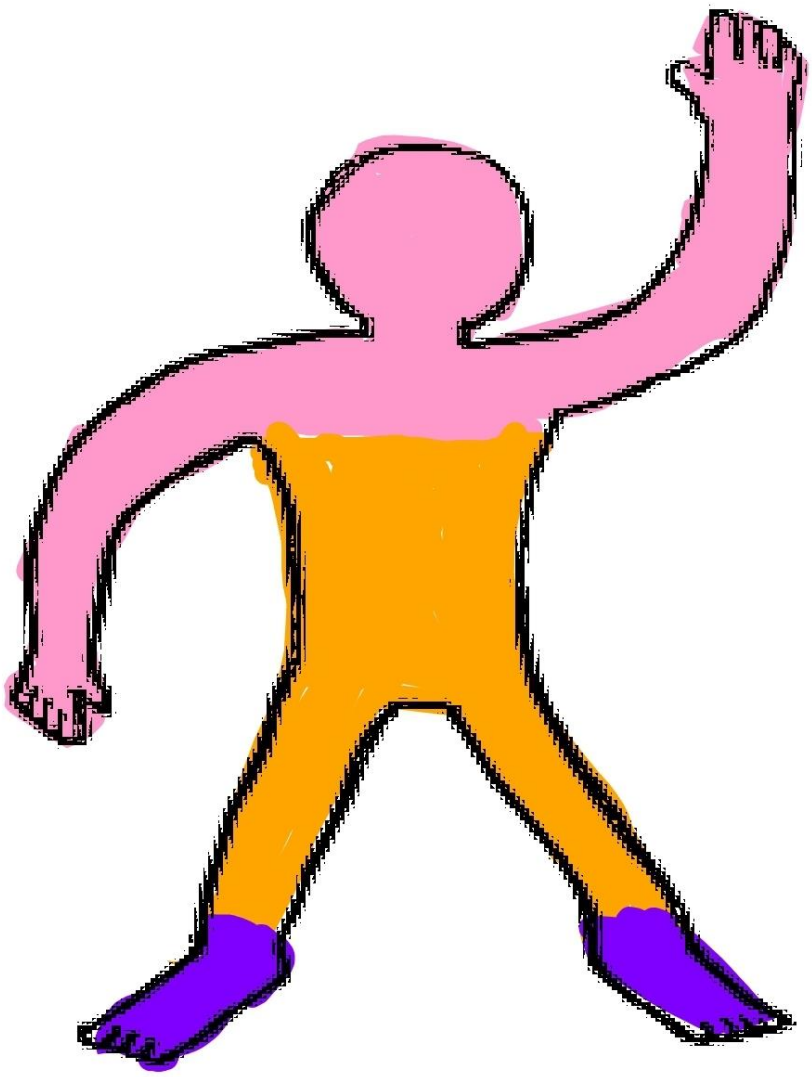
Figure 4.7: P11 Language Portrait



Colour	Language
Pink	French
Orange	English
Green	Swahili

In this language portrait, green is the prominent colour, indicating the participant's home language, Swahili. She sees Swahili as her heart and soul. Pink was used to represent French because she uses French when she thinks. When studying, she describes that her brain wants to use French, although she is now studying in English and that she has to use English when she thinks. Only the mouth area are indicated in orange to represent English as she feels that currently, she has to use English to speak every day. She indicates that English is only in her mouth area because she still translates everything in French to understand it.

Figure 4.8: P12 Language Portrait



Colour	Language
Pink	French
Orange	English
Purple	Swahili

Participant 12 used pink to represent French in his head, arms and hands. His home language is French and he remarks that he thinks in French and still finds it very difficult to think in English. French is also used in the arms and hands because he can use French to do many things. The rest of the body, except the feet are indicated as English. The participant describes that he has to use a lot of English now (studying and living in South Africa) and it feels like English "is everywhere". The purple feet represents Swahili because he doesn't use it a lot in South Africa and when he is at home in the DRC, he only uses Swahili in social settings.

It is clear from the data that all the participants are multilingual. Their language repertoires all include French and English, as well as one or more other indigenous languages. Guisir and Punu are indigenous languages from Gabon and Swahili, Lingala and Chiluba are indigenous languages in the DRC. Swahili is also spoken in other African countries. What is notable is that all participants show either French or English as the head of the body, indicating that they are thinking in that language, or are forced to think in that language. All the participants indicate that they are naturally inclined to use French in their thinking, as French was their MOI at school and therefore the language they were used to in academic contexts. However, in their current academic context where they are studying in English, they are forced to use English in their thinking. Most of the participants also indicate that they listen to the lectures and read the study material in English, translate it into French to ensure understanding and then study it in English.

4.5 Thematic analysis: individual interview data

The data from the individual interviews was analysed and themes that emerged from all the interviews were identified. The identified themes will be discussed in detail in this section in order to answer the research questions in the concluding chapter. The aim is to provide information that the African Francophone students shared with regards to their reasons for coming to South Africa to study in English, their experiences, barriers they face and how they overcome such barriers or not. The first theme that was identified was that all the participants are looking for a better future by studying in South Africa. This theme consists of various elements that are discussed in section 4.5.1. The second theme that was identified, was the importance of English and a qualification in English. This is discussed in section 4.5.2. The participants also found that studying in English is difficult. This was the third theme that was identified, and is discussed in section 4.5.3. This theme consists of different listed subthemes that underpin why these students find it difficult to study in English. Although the participants find it difficult to study in English, they are also motivated to succeed. This was the fourth theme that was identified, which is discussed in section 4.5.4. Finally, the last theme is the Francophone students' fear of xenophobia and feelings of isolation, discussed in section 4.5.5.

4.5.1 Looking for a better future

From the data analysed, the main reason why African Francophone students come to South Africa to obtain a tertiary qualification is to secure a better future for themselves. All participants said that if they get a qualification in South Africa, they will be able to go back to their home countries and secure high level employment. If they stayed in their home countries and obtained a qualification there, they would not be able to secure good jobs.

> …like in Congo we don't have big university like in South Africa and they are not well-rated and so my parents said that I need to go somewhere where they consider my diploma. (P5)

Some of the participants also had dreams of securing good job opportunities in South Africa or elsewhere in the world such as in the US. For example, participant 6 said:

> So I'm like okay, once I am done studying, I can get a job here, but I'm also having other ideas like I can go also out of South Africa, out of Africa. To have just a better future, not like I am running away from my culture or where I am from, no I am not running from them. I am just trying to have a better future. (P6)

The participants' parents have also been involved in their decision to study in South Africa and in some cases, their parents were the driving force behind their decision to come here to study. The participants and their parents believe that tertiary institutions in their home countries are not of a good standard and that they cannot obtain a tertiary qualification of high quality in their home countries. This can be seen in some of the quotes above, as well as other examples from participants, who said the following:

> …for my father and my mother, to study at university in my country is not good. For them, we have to go out of the country…. So after my studies I can go back in my country and be a better person. In my country if you are going to apply for work, like for example me, I'm coming from South Africa (qualification from South Africa) they will take me because I am coming from South Africa. (P2)

> …our universities in Congo ahm, they are good but sometimes there is corruption, there is mmm some bad things, bad things, that's why since I was a kid my parents decided that me and my brothers and sisters has to go for university in foreign countries….If someone come here in South Africa and finish school (university), when he is going back to Congo there's big chance to get a good job. That's the first motivation, the main motivation. (P7)

> Well, my parents prefer us to study here because you see the education back home was not, uhm, is not that good and it's not that you can get a certificate there that is on the same level as anywhere in South Africa. Like if I graduate here, I can go to the US

> and work. So I am here practically for a better future for myself and my parents know that back home education isn't that good. (P10)

4.5.2 The importance of English / an English qualification

Participants feel that it is important to learn and be able to speak English. English is a way for them to empower themselves to become better people. They also view English as a way to find better employment anywhere in the world. Some examples from the interview data include the following:

> For me, I love to travel and know every language in the world….(P1)
>
> I want to know how to speak English, I want to learn English.(P2)
>
> …I don't want to study at the university in Congo in French because I am going to leave Congo one day …so I decide to go out of my home country ahm to know about English, because I love English…(P6)
>
> I make the legs English because with English I can go anywhere in the world…(P7)
>
> …I use English a lot now. English will open new world for me. (P8)

4.5.3 Studying in South Africa in English is difficult

All participants find that it is difficult to study at a tertiary institution where English is the MOI. Participants mention that they often feel lost because of their lack of English proficiency, that it is very challenging and that it causes stress and sometimes even illness. Studying in English is difficult because of various reasons.

Listening, understanding and speaking in English

The participants find it difficult to listen to others speaking in English and understand the message. The reason for this is the speed at which the speaker is speaking. The participants described the way they tried to listen to someone speaking to them, or listen to a lecture. While listening, they try to translate the speaker's words into French to help them understand.

Replying when someone is speaking to them is also difficult. Some participants find it so stressful that they avoid situations where that could happen. Speaking in class, whether it is for the purpose of a presentation, or just asking a question, often creates anxiety with the participants. Participants commented that lecturers at VUT assume that all students can speak, write and understand English well, while that is not the case.

Code switching in lectures

The MOI at VUT is English and all lectures are supposed to be conducted in English. However, some lecturers code switch from English to the indigenous South African languages, such as Sotho or Zulu. Although this assists South African students and facilitates better understanding, it creates confusion and frustration for students from foreign countries. All the participants mentioned lecturers mixing English with indigenous South African languages as a problem and a frustration in the classroom as is evident in the following example:

> Sometimes the lecturer will say something in another language (South African indigenous language), blah, blah, blah and people will start laughing and you are lost… but sometimes also the lecturer is saying something very important but I can't understand because it is in that language. (P9)

Group work and the use of English

In classes where certain projects or assignments are done in groups, the Francophone students are at a disadvantage as South African students will use indigenous languages, or code-switch between English and one of the indigenous languages when working in the group. When the Francophone student requests group members to speak English, he/she will often be ignored. This will lead to exclusion of the Francophone student and possible academic implications with marks for such project or assignment. The participants who noted the problems with group work, feel that South African students just don't care that they ignore or exclude a French student. This is in contrast with the way these foreign students feel they would have showed solidarity if a foreign student was studying in their home countries. The following example shows how participants often struggle with group work:

> Sometimes when you have to work in class with the group, they speak their language and you don't understand and they don't care. They don't want you in the group. (P9)

> Also group work in the class, it's a problem. Big big problem, especially for me. Since I started (university) I never get nice group. (P5)

South African students and the use of English

South African students speak to each other in their home languages, such as Sotho. Many South African students have poor English proficiency and rarely speak English to one another. Most South African students on campus speak to fellow students in one of the indigenous South African languages. If Francophone students ask them something, or ask them to speak in

English, most of the students will rather ignore them, or ignore the request, as they also struggle with English. The following example indicates this problem:

> …when you are with people in your class, it won't be easy. Not all of them want to help you. Most of them will just be discussing in the mother tongue. Some of them are not able to speak good English. Sometimes, we think everyone can speak English, but not all of them can speak good. (P6)

Studying in English

Studying in English takes longer for Francophone students. While reading, they report often using a dictionary to form an understanding of words and the overall text. Studying together with South African students is nearly impossible, because the Francophone students often take double the amount of time to read through a text. So when the South African students have already started discussing the text, paging back and forth in the textbook, the Francophone student is still trying to form an understanding of the text. This is illustrated in the following example:

> …and also when we are studying, we take longer to read the book. Not because we are stupid but because we struggle with the language. Where other students read 30 minutes, I will take one hour because it takes longer to understand. (P9)

Writing tests in English

Francophone students feel that they often fail tests because of the barrier of English. They take longer to read and understand questions in English. Answering the questions in English also takes them longer than other students, because they often don't know the correct English words to use. Furthermore, they are not allowed to use dictionaries when writing a test. While studying, some participants also translate everything in French first to ensure understanding and after doing so, learn it in English. Participants' struggle to write tests in shown in the following example:

> …they don't allow us to use our phone or dictionary in tests and then what are we going to do? We are suffering a lot because of that. (P6)

> … I must work hard the whole year. I make enough ahm enough time to memorise and learn the words and when I don't pass, I just have to do it again. (P7)

Failing because of English

Participants agree that when they fail subjects, it is not because they are not intellectually able to succeed, but because of their struggle with English. Especially in their first year at university, they fail subjects because of their lack of English proficiency. Participants find subjects with a lot of reading to be more difficult, because they have to remember or memorise the English words to use. Subjects that require understanding, for example Mathematics, are easier for the participants. The following example illustrates this point:

> Also subjects with numbers, like maths, are fine, but English is a problem, or subjects where there is a lot of reading in English. The language affects us a lot. (P10)

The need for a structured academic English language course

Participants reported that understanding English in an academic setting is different from understanding English that is taught at language school. English that is taught at the language school helps Francophone students to use English in everyday situations such as greeting someone, buying something from a shop or asking for help. However, the participants all commented on the difference and difficulty of using and understanding English used in academic contexts. The following example illustrates this:

> …when I came here I was doing English (at the language school) and then, when I went to university, it was totally different. (P2)"

Participants noted the need for a structured academic English language course before commencement of their study at VUT.

> It would be better if all foreign students can take an English course before they start university. (P6)

> …when foreign students comes at university, ahm maybe they can learn English basics at the beginning. After that they can start university. (P7)

Participant P7 has previously been studying at a university in Cyprus. He explained that there, he had to do an English course and write a test before starting at the university. People who failed the test, were not allowed to start university.

4.5.4 Socio-cultural differences

Participants reported that socio-cultural differences between themselves and South African students, make it difficult for them to adapt in their new environment. Various socio-cultural differences were indicated with South African students. This includes lack of solidarity with

the Francophone students, the way in which students talk very loudly and shout at one another on campus, how students behave in class and towards the lecturers, the way students dress, especially women who wear revealing clothes, the lack of respect for lecturers, littering and the conflict between people. The following two examples give evidence of the socio-cultural differences experienced by the participants:

> Mmm, there is noise, noise here especially on campus. That is difficult for me. And people are just different from our country (laugh)… They don't like to spend time with foreigners. Maybe it's just their culture, maybe it's also in my country we are used to Congolese culture which we have more solidarity, mmm it's maybe different. (P7)

> I don't feel like I can be part of their culture. I don't find I have a relationship with them… I don't like the way people here do things. I will not do things that some of these students do… Culturally I am different from them… it's not the foreigners who give lecturers attitude… (P10)

These socio-cultural differences contribute to Francophone and foreign students on campus to keep to themselves as they struggle to find a connection with the culture revealed by South African students.

4.5.5 Motivation to succeed

Although the participants found the first few weeks and months in South Africa very difficult, they expressed their determination to be successful in their studies and to get a qualification. All the participants described the first few weeks and months to be very hard, using words such as "not easy", "lost", "very difficult", "scared", "challenging", "very fast", "struggling" and "different from my home country". Most expressed the urge to go back to their home countries in those first months.

However, they voiced determination to finish their studies and obtain a qualification, before going back. This is despite all the participants acknowledging that they fail certain subjects and that they struggle academically because of studying in English. Their motivation to be successful is evident in the following example:

> … you must be confident with yourself. If something is difficult, you must know that you can do it… Like me, my problem is English, but I know that I can do it, I can finish it. One day I will speak English like no-one. (P1)

When the participants feel that it is too difficult to continue with their studies in South Africa, they also motivate themselves by thinking about their future and goals and the fact that if they go back without a qualification, they will not be able to secure a good job. The following examples describe the motivation of participants:

> So I am just focused on my studies. I make a lot of sacrifice to make sure I get my papers (qualification) so that I can live my own life. (P6)

> You have to be strong in your head when you come here to study because it's not easy. Many students from DRC just want to go back home because it is difficult…When I struggle or if someone is not nice, I think about my goal, why I am here. I think about my future, because when I have the qualification, I can do anything. (P9)

Making plans to overcome obstacles

In order to be academically successful, the participants have found ways to help themselves understand and succeed. Two thirds of the participants indicated that they prefer not asking the lecturers for help if they didn't understand the lecture. However, they will return to their place of residence after class and ask fellow Francophone students who has progressed further in their studies, who has a better knowledge of the subject, or better English proficiency to explain the work to them. Once they understand the work, they can continue to study it, as is evident from the following example:

> …first if I don't understand something, I will not go to the lecturer. I will then go back home and ask someone there so he can explain to me in French. So the French student help one another a lot. (P2)

To improve their English proficiency, most participants indicated that they watch English films and listen to English music. However, only one participant indicated reading English texts to improve proficiency. Approximately half of the participants felt that speaking English as much as possible, regardless of making mistakes, improve proficiency. Unfortunately, the other half indicated that they avoid speaking English. Some participants have indicated that they were advised to stop the habit of translating everything into French and to try to just use English as much as possible. They received this advice from Francophone students who have been studying in English for a longer period. The following example is the advice that a first year student received from her brother who has been studying in South Africa for the last three years:

> My brother ask me to watch a lot of movie in English, to get used to the different accents, the language and then to speak with people, even if I'm shy, he just told me okay speak, even if you make mistake just speak, speak and to stop translating everything in French. Just keep English English… (P5)

As noted above, the Francophone students are often disadvantaged when they have to do group work for projects or assignments with a group of South African students, as the South Africans don't want to hold group meetings and discussions in English or code-switch between English and one of the indigenous languages. The Francophone students overcome this obstacle by requesting the lecturer to move them into a group where there are other French-speaking students. Alternatively, some also offer to type the group's assignment document after it has been compiled. That way, they don't have to be involved in discussions, but still contribute to the assignment and obtain a mark.

4.5.6 Fear of xenophobia and feelings of isolation

The participants indicated that South African students in general don't want them in South Africa. These Francophone students thought that they would be able to fit in on campus after being here for some time, but still feel excluded which leads to feelings of isolation. The participants also feel that if a foreign student would come to study in their home country, they would behave in contrast with how South Africans are behaving. Participants reported that South African students, for the most part, keep to themselves and the ones who talk to them and help them are only a small minority. They all express that it is not easy to make friends with South Africans and that foreigners are considered as outsiders. The following example describes these feelings:

> Also we are a little bit worried to approach them because we know they don't like foreigner and that is why we prefer to stay together with other French people like us. (P3)

Some participants have South African contacts, but when they communicate, it is mostly about work. Some have even been told directly that they are not welcome in South Africa, as illustrated in the following example where a South African student asked the participant why she came to South Africa:

> …and she say no, you have to go back to your country. You are coming here to steal our jobs…and we are struggling with the works (employment). (P5)

The participants feel that they are not considered and accepted, as foreign students may not apply for bursaries. Some have been excluded from the university's sports teams, because they cannot speak an indigenous South African language. They feel that when black South Africans speak to them and see that they are foreigners, their attitude changes. When asking for directions on the street, people will rather laugh and walk away, than help them.

Most of the participants expressed a fear of xenophobia. Although VUT has officially stated the institution's position against xenophobia during the last countrywide xenophobic attacks in 2019, participants feel that xenophobia is still evident under the surface in society and in the mind set of some South Africans about foreign students. They feel that it is evident in the way they hear South Africans speak about foreigners and in the way they will laugh at foreign students and mock them when they have to speak in class.

For these reasons the participants have feelings of being disconnected in South Africa. Francophone students mostly stay with other foreigners and have foreigners as friends. They become resilient with an attitude to stay away from South Africans and focus on completing their studies. The foreign students become one another's support network and help each other. All participants noted that this support network helps them to persevere and succeed.

4.6 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I presented the results of the data collection, and the analysis of this data. The aim of the language questionnaires was to establish the linguistic repertoires of participants. Analysis of the questionnaire data indicated that the linguistic repertoires of participants average four languages. Furthermore, the participants' median age of first exposure to English outside of school was 15. The questionnaire data also showed that the participants completed an English language course, with a median duration of 12 months, before commencement of their studies at VUT. The language portraits provided further information regarding the linguistic repertoires of the participants. Analysis of the data found that participants used French and English for academic purposes and that the other languages in their repertoires were used mainly in home and social contexts. The aim of the individual interviews was to identify themes that would provide an understanding of the participants' reasons for studying in South Africa in English as well as their experiences of and barriers to studying in English. One of the

main themes identified was that African Francophone students come to South Africa to secure a better future for themselves. Other themes highlighted that English is an important language for these students and that a qualification at an English tertiary institution outside their home countries, holds prestige and better job opportunities. Although participants find it difficult to study in English and face different barriers, they are motivated to succeed in their studies. In the following, concluding chapter, the research questions of this study will be answered, based on the results and analysis presented in this chapter. The study's limitations will also be discussed and further avenues for research will be suggested.

Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusion

A growing number of students from African Francophone countries, who previously had French as medium of instruction (MOI), are annually enrolling at South African tertiary institutions where English is the sole MOI. This is also evident at VUT where 1058 African Francophone students have registered in 2020. The majority of these students come from the DRC. It has been observed that many of these students struggle to communicate and achieve academic success in English. This has also been confirmed by various studies that found a lack of English language proficiency to be one of the main reasons why these students struggle. However, fewer studies have investigated these students' own experiences of studying in a language that was not previously a MOI for them, as well as their reasons for doing so. This study has investigated the linguistic repertoires of multilingual students from Francophone countries in Africa who previously had French as MOI, at VUT. It further investigated the reasons why these students choose to study in English in South Africa, their experiences of studying in English, the barriers they face, and their attempts to overcome such barriers. Such data can be used in a developmental capacity by VUT and create a better understanding of the difficulties these Francophone students experience with regards to English as MOI and studying in another country. Such an understanding and the data collected can also be used to find ways to support these students' academic experience.

5.1 Answers to the research questions

This study explored the linguistic repertoires of African Francophone students in order to answer research question 1. Research question 1 was "What are the linguistic repertoires of multilingual students who had French as MOI at school and are studying at a tertiary institution with English as sole MOI?" In order to answer this question, I drew up a table to list the number of languages in each of the participants' repertoires. The language portraits were also analysed in the study of the linguistic repertoires of participants. From the data, it was found that all participants are multilingual and that the median number of languages in their repertoires, are four. All the participants included French and English in their repertoires, as well as other indigenous languages from their home countries. The least number of languages indicated in their repertoires, were three. It was found that participants use French and English in academic contexts and that the other indigenous languages in their repertoires are mostly used in family-

and social contexts. All the participants indicated that they are naturally inclined to use French in their thinking processes, as French is the academic language they were instructed in at school. However, in the current academic context where they are studying in English, they are forced to think using English, but find it difficult to do so and still use translation to assist them.

The findings made in this study there correlate with earlier studies by Gumperz (1971), Busch (2006, 2012), Pennycook (2010), Blommaert (2010) and Kramsch (2002) as noted in chapter two, that speakers use different languages in their repertoires for different contexts or particular social happenings. In the case of this study, the African Francophone students all use French and English for academic contexts and the other languages in their repertoires, in social and family contexts. Further correlation of this study with Blommaert's (2010) study indicate that speakers do not necessarily have equal competency in the different languages in their repertoires and with Edwards (1994) who noted individual multilingualism, pointing out that multilingual individuals have different competencies for different languages in their repertoires. In the language portraits discussed in chapter four, different participants indicated that they cannot speak all the languages in their repertoire equally well. Some languages were only learned later on in their lives and are only used when speaking to a certain group of people.

As many African Francophone students struggle with English, the study was interested in the reasons why these students choose to come to South Africa to study in English. Therefore, the second research question was "What are the reasons that multilingual students who had French as MOI at school choose to study at a tertiary institution with English as sole MOI?" The data from the individual interviews was analysed in order to answer this question and indicated that the main reason of participants is to secure a better future for themselves Participants reported that a qualification from a South African tertiary institution ensures good employment opportunities in their home countries, whereas a qualification in their home countries does not ensure good employment opportunities. These students also view a qualification at a South African tertiary institution as an opportunity to secure employment in South Africa and other countries in the world, as some of them do not want to return to their home countries. The parents of the participants also motivated them to study outside of their home countries, believing that a high quality tertiary education cannot be obtained in their home countries. This correlates with findings by Tati (2010) and Kwaramba (2012) that African Francophone students come to South Africa to obtain a better quality tertiary education than in their home

countries and that student migration to South Africa will increase due to a decline in quality education and limited career-and income opportunities in their home countries.

Another supporting reason is the participants' high regard for English and a qualification in English. It is important for them to learn and speak English and English is seen as a gateway for worldwide employment opportunities. This study therefore, confirms the notion of the global power of English as studied by Crystal (2003) which indicates the global power of English as one of the main reasons why students decide to study in other countries in English. In the DRC and Gabon where the participants in this study comes from, English as a foreign language is also taught in schools. The international status of English that was found to be a motivating factor in the migration of students from the DRC to South Africa by Pineteh and Mulu (2016) also surfaced in the data analysis of this study.

The study was also interested in the experiences of these African Francophone students in South Africa, firstly with regards to studying in English, secondly with regards to the barriers they experience in adapting and lastly with regards to their attempts to overcome the barriers. The third research question therefore was "How do multilingual students who had French as MOI at school describe their experiences of studying in English?" The last research question that will be answered together with research question three was "What barriers do multilingual students who had French as MOI at school experience in adapting and integrating in studying at a South African tertiary institution with English as sole MOI, how do they attempt to overcome these barriers and how successful do they feel they are in overcoming such barriers?" Data from the individual interviews were analysed to answer research question three and four. The data suggested that the participants found it difficult to study in English and that they experienced many challenges to study in English.

Although they understand English, participants reported to finding it difficult to listen to and understand lectures, because of the speed at which the speaker is speaking. They struggle because they have to translate the English into French while listening, in order to understand. Similarly, they also struggle to reply, or speak because they struggle to find the correct words to do so. Therefore, they often avoid speaking in English. Furthermore, it was found that even if they have a relatively good English proficiency, they still struggle with English in academic contexts. The participants indicated that they see a clear distinction between English proficiency and academic English proficiency. The findings in this study therefore confirm the

disadvantages of submersion education as studied by Piller (2016) where students have to complete their curriculum in a language that they have not mastered completely. The participants also fail and repeat subjects because of their lack of English proficiency and have to work much harder than other students because of the language problem. This study further confirms research by different scholars discussed in chapter two that studying in an L2 can be a major factor in achievement of academic success or failure.

The study also found that participants experience code switching in some lectures, although the MOI at VUT is English and all communication is supposed to be in English. English has been found to be code switched with indigenous South African languages such as Sotho or Zulu. Although this is beneficial to the majority of South African students, it makes it impossible for Francophone students to understand creating frustration and confusion for these students.

Another problem for participants to study in English is experienced where group work is involved. When Francophone students have to do group work with South African students, they are disadvantaged when South African students use indigenous languages while working in the group. Participants reported that they are often ignored when they request the group to use English causing exclusion and have negative academic implications for them. This was also found in Pineteh and Mulu's (2016) study where Francophone students don't like working with South African students. South African students also use South African indigenous languages in their everyday conversations on campus making it difficult for Francophone students to integrate on campus.

Studying and writing tests in English have also been found to create challenges as participants take longer to study because of their lack of English proficiency. Participants often use dictionaries when they study to search for the meaning of words in French in order to understand what they are studying. Their lack of English proficiency can also cause them to fail tests, because they take longer to read, to understand and to find the correct English words to use when they write the answers.

With regard to the participants' lack of English proficiency and the challenges experienced because of English, participants also expressed the need for a structured English language course before commencement of study at the university. This relates to a proposal in the study

of Ralarala *et al* (2016) discussed in chapter two and a proposed further avenue for study, that diagnostic admission tests for international students be implemented at CPUT to determine the language support that is required by international students, confirming the need for language support.

Participants also reported socio-cultural differences between themselves and South African students, such as lack of solidarity, "loudness", behaviour in class and towards lecturers, the dress code of South African students, the lack of respect for lecturers, littering and the conflict between people. These socio-cultural differences were also a reason why participants kept to themselves.

Another barrier identified in the interviews was that African Francophone students generally feel excluded and isolated and that the majority of South African students don't want them in South Africa. They find it difficult to make friends with South Africans and have mostly other foreign students as friends. Various studies in chapter two also found challenges in the relationships between South African and international students in South Africa. These include the studies by Weber (2016), Ralarala, *et al* (2016) and Pineteh and Mulu (2016) discussed in chapter two. Challenges included discrimination, feelings of exclusion and hostility and strained social relationships. However, international studies such as those by Xu (1991), Lee and Rice (2010) and Tullock (2019) discussed in chapter two, also found similar challenges.

They fear xenophobia despite VUT's official denouncement of xenophobic attacks and the declaration by the university during the last countrywide xenophobia in 2019 in South Africa that all foreign students and staff will be safe from xenophobic attacks. Participants feel that xenophobic thoughts are still bubbling beneath the surface and that it is evident in the way some South Africans speak about foreigners. This makes participants fearful.

Despite all the challenges and barriers faced by African Francophone students, they have become resilient and found ways to overcome barriers and challenges, as they are motivated to succeed. Participants all expressed their determination to persevere until they obtain their qualifications. They motivate themselves by thinking about their future. Participants use other foreign students as a support network here in South Africa and they help and motivate one another when facing challenges. They are also resourceful in plans to overcome academic challenges of learning in English.

5.2 Limitations of the study

This study has various limitations. As the study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic and had to adhere to government protocol on social distancing, physical contact with participants could not be made and recruitment of participants and data collection were conducted remotely. This also impacted the study with regards to a limited participant sample, as not all possible participants who were approached, responded to the invitation email. The recruited participants also did not take part in-and completed all three research instruments.

The questionnaires could have included questions regarding participants' proficiency levels of the languages in their repertoires which could have enhanced findings. The use of language portraits could also have been improved by providing instructions for participants to indicate the languages in their repertoires in order of proficiency and more information could then have been provided in the individual interviews.

Some information received in the individual interviews are the opinions of participants and may be subjective. However, regardless of these limitations, the interviews can be investigated for further insights and research possibilities.

5.3 Possibilities for further research

Suggestions for further research include case studies that can be done regarding African Francophone students' experiences at other tertiary institutions in South African where English is the MOI. The data from such case studies can be compared with the data in this study to draw more comprehensive conclusions. Research could also be done about English proficiency levels of African Francophone students who apply to study in South Africa, as well as accurate testing of such proficiency levels. Furthermore, the value of compulsory structured English courses for African Francophone students at English tertiary institutions in South Africa before commencement of study, warrants investigation.

REFERENCES

Andrade, M.S. 2006. International students in English speaking universities: Adjustment factors. *Journal of research in International Education*, 5(2):131-154.

Aronin, L., & Singleton, D. 2010. Affordances and the diversity of multilingualism. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 205:105–129.

Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. 2010. The diversity of multilingualism in Education. *International Journal of the sociology of language*, 205:37–53.

Bayiga, F.T. 2016. Profiles of multilingualism in Kampala: An analysis of language biographies and language repertoires of university students. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch University [Online]. Available: http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/98800.

Blommaert, J. & Backus, A. 2013. Super diverse repertoires and the individual, in De Saint Georges, I. & Weber, J.J. (eds). *Multilingualism and multimodality: Current challenges for educational studies.* The Netherlands: Sense Publishers. 11 – 32.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2012. Thematic analysis, in H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (eds.). *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological.* Vol.2. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. 57-71.

Bristowe, A.J. 2013. The linguistic identities of multilingual adolescents involved in educational enrichment programmes in Johannesburg. Unpublished master's thesis. Stellenbosch University [Online]. Available: https://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/85661

Blommaert, J. 2007. Linguistic diversity: Africa, in M. Hellinger & A. Powels (eds.). *Handbook of language and communication: Diversity and change*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 123-149.

Busch, B. 2006. Language biographies: approaches to multilingualism in education and linguistic research. *PRAESA Occasional Papers* No. 24 [Electronic]. Available: http://www.praesa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Paper24.pdf [2020, April 20].

Busch, B. 2012. The Linguistic Repertoire Revisited. *Applied Linguistics*, 33(5):503–523. doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ams056

Busch, B. 2018. The language portrait in multilingualism research: Theoretical and methodological considerations. *Working Papers in Urban Language & Literacies* 236 [Online].
Available:https://www.academia.edu/35988562/WP236_Busch_2018_The_language_portrait_in_multilingualism_research_Theoretical_and_methodological_considerations [2020, September 30].

Crystal, D. 2003. *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

De Jager, A., Tewson, A., Ludlow, B. and Boydell, K.M. 2016. Embodied Ways of Storying the Self: A Systematic Review of Body-Mapping. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 17(2):22. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-17.2.2526

Edwards, J. 1994. *Multilingualism*. London: Penguin.

Forsey, M, Broomhall, S. & Davis, J. 2011. Broadening the mind?: Australian student reflections on the experience of overseas study. *Journal of studies in International Education*, 16(2):128–139. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315311407511

Gill, S. 2007. Overseas students' intercultural adaptation as intercultural learning: a transformative framework. *Compare: A journal of comparative and International education*, 37(2):167-183. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920601165512

Gumperz, J.J. 1968. The Speech Community, in A. Duranti (ed.). *Linguistic anthropology: A reader*. 2nd edition. United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell. 66-73.

Gumperz, J.J. 1971a. Linguistic repertoires, grammars and second language instruction, in A.S. Dil (ed.). *Language in social groups: Essays by John J. Gumperz*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 177-289.

Gumperz, J.J. 1971b. Linguistic and social interaction in two communities, in A.S. Dil (ed.). *Language in social groups: Essays by John J. Gumperz*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 151-176.

Hartford, B., Valdman, A., & Foster, C. (eds.). 1982. *Issues in international bilingual education*. New York: Plenum Press.

Hawkins, J.M. 2017. Thematic analysis, in M. Allen (ed.). *The SAGE encyclopedia of communication research methods* [Electronic]. Available: https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n624. [August 2 2020].

Kapp, R. 1998. Access to success: literacy in academic contents. Cape Town: UCT Press. .

Kamwi, B.L. 2017. Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia. Unpublished master's thesis. Stellenbosch University [Online]. Available: http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/100954

Kasanga, L.A. 2012. English in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *World Englishes*, 31(1):48–69.

Kemp, C. 2009. Defining multilingualism, in L. Aronin & B. Hufeisen (eds.). *The Exploration of Multilingualism: Development of research on L3, multilingualism and multiple language acquisition.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 10-26.

Kramsch, C. 2002. In search of the intercultural. *Journal of sociolinguistics*, 6(2):275-285. doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9481.00188

Kang, E.Y. 2013. Multilingual competence. *Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics*, 13(2):55-56.

Kwaramba, M. 2012. Internationalisation of higher education in Southern Africa with South Africa as a major exporter. *Journal of international education and leadership*, 2(1):1-22.

Lee, J.J. & Rice, C. 2007. Welcome to America? International Student Perceptions of Discrimination. *Higher Education*, 53(3):381-409.

Montgomery, C. 2009. A decade of internationalisation: Has it influenced students' views of cross-cultural group work at university? *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(2):256-270. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315308329790

Moodley, V. 2010. Code-switching and communicative competence in the language classroom. *Journal for Language Teaching*, 44(1):7–22. doi: https://10.10520/EJC59972

Nesterenoa, V.S. Vychuzhanina, E.V. & Milovanova, I.I. 2015. Global Language: will the Sun ever set on the Empire of the English language. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 200:601-606. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.08.044

Pennycook, A. 2010. *Language as local practice*. London: Routledge.

Piller, I. 2016. *Linguistic diversity and social justice: An introduction to applied sociolinguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pineteh, E.A. & Mulu, T.N. 2016. Francophone transnational students, social exclusion and the challenges of adaptation at a South African University of Technology. *African Human Mobility Review*, 2 (1):383-403.

Ralarala, M.K., Pineteh, E.A. & Mchiza, Z. 2016. A case study on the language and socio-cultural challenges experienced by international students studying at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. *South African journal of higher education*, 30(4):231-255.

Rassool, N. 2004. Sustaining linguistic diversity within the global cultural economy: issues of language rights and linguistic possibilities. *Comparative Education*, 40(2):199-214.

Richards, J.C. and R. Schmidt. 2010. Dictionary of language and teaching and applied linguistics. 4th ed. Harlow: Pearson education limited.

Scott, L. 2015. English lingua franca in the South African tertiary classroom: recognizing the value of diversity. Unpublished maters thesis. Stellenbosch University. [Online]. Available: http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/98075

Shartiely, N.E. 2016. Code-switching in university classroom interaction: A case study of the University of Dar es Salaam. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus*, 49: 215-231. doi: https://doi.org/10.5842/49-0-663

Shiweda, A. 2013. Multilingual communication in a higher education classroom in Namibia where the dominant community language is Oshiwambo. Unpublished master's thesis, Stellenbosch University [Online]. Available: https://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/85751

Simons, G.F. & Fennig, C.D. (eds.). 2018. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 21st ed. [Online] Available: http://www.ethnologue.com [2018, September 27].

Smit, U. 2005. Multilingualism and English. The lingua franca concept in language description and language learning pedagogy, in R. Raistauer, C. Cali, I. Cullin & K. Chester (eds.). *Mehrsprachigkeit und Kommunikation in der Diplomatie. Favorita Papers 4.* Vienna: Diplomatic Academy. 66-76.

Stroud, C. 2014. Language, society, diversity, in Z. Bock & G. Mheta (eds). *Language, society and communication: an introduction.* Pretoria: Van Schaik

Tati, G., 2010. Student Migration in South Africa. A Special reference to the Youth from Francophone Africa. *Espace populations sociétés. Space populations societies*, 2/3: 281-296. doi: https://doi.org/10.4000/eps.4160

Tullock, B.D. 2019. Transnationalism and identity in study abroad: multilingual sojourners in Barcelona. Unpublished doctoral thesis. Georgetown University [Online]. Available: https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/handle/10822/1057313

Weber, E. 2016. An ambivalent community: International African students in residence at a South African university, in *Education provision to everyone: Comparing perspectives from around the world. BCES Conference books*, 14(1):193-199.

Xu, M. 1991. The Impact of English-Language Proficiency on International Graduate Students' Perceived Academic Difficulty. *Research in Higher Education*, 32:557–570. doi: https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00992628

Yeh, C. 2014. Taiwanese students' experiences and attitudes towards English-medium courses in tertiary education. *RELC Journal*, 45(3):305-319.

APPENDICES

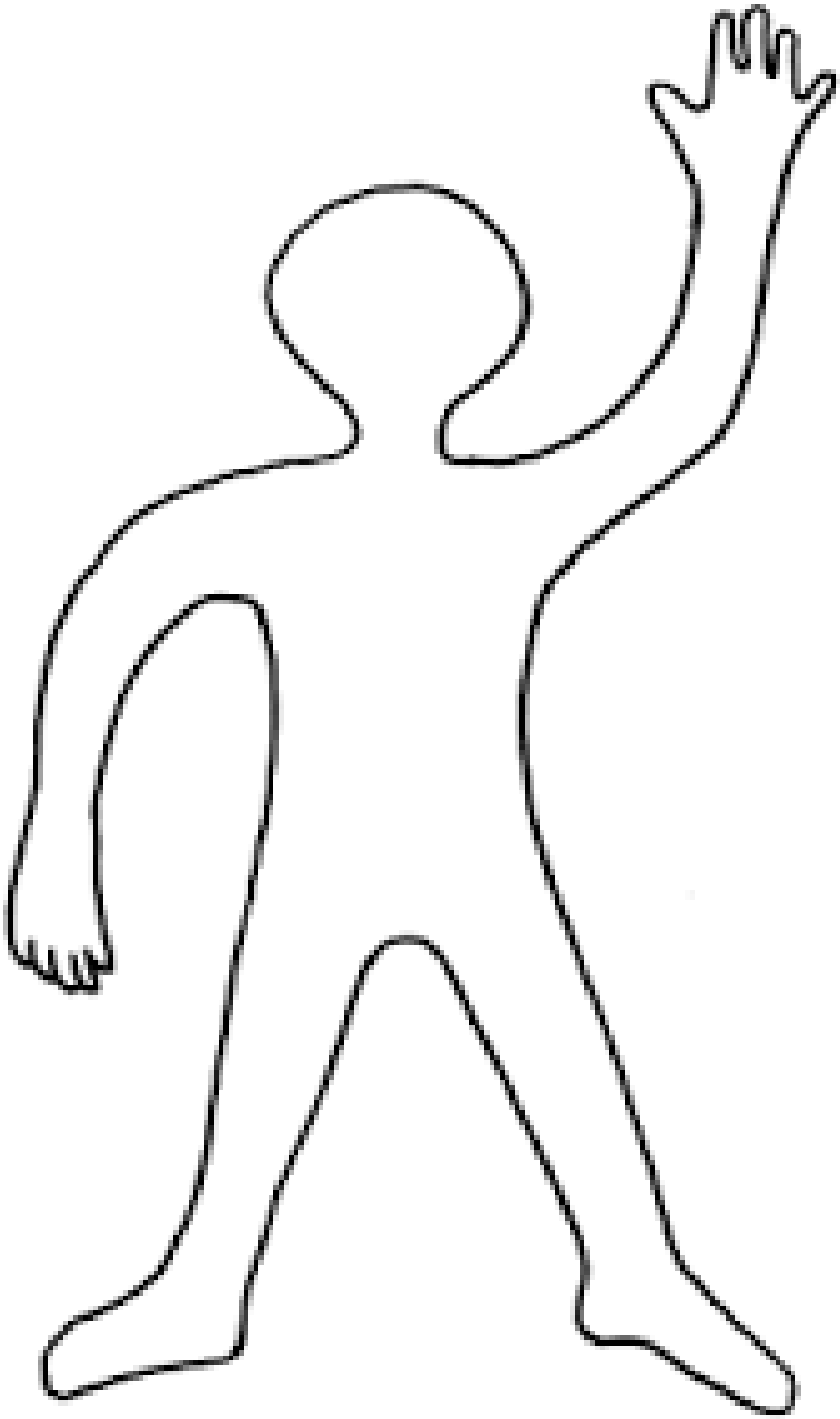
Appendix A

Student language background questionnaire

GENERAL			
Surname & Initials			
What do people call you?			
Cell phone number			
E-mail address			
Mark with X	Male:	Female:	Prefer not to say:
Country of origin			
Home (first) language			
Other languages			
LANGUAGE			
What was the name of your primary school?			
In which country was your primary school?			
What was / were the language(s) of teaching in your primary school?			
Which other languages were taught in your primary school?			
What was the name of your secondary school?			
In which country was your secondary school?			
What was / were the language(s) of teaching in your secondary school?			
Which other languages were taught in your secondary school?			
At what age were you first exposed to English?			

How / Where were your first exposed to English?	
Did you do an English language course before studying here?	
If so, where did you do an English language course?	
Do you have friends in South Africa who are not French?	

Appendix B



Appendix C

Interview schedule

1. Please explain your language portrait to me.

2. What are your reasons for indicating the different languages in your repertoire in certain areas in the body silhouette of the language portrait?

3. What are the reasons that made you decide to come and study in South Africa where the medium of instruction is English?

4. Tell me about your experience of the first few weeks in which you were studying here at VUT.

5. Please describe your experience of studying in English here at VUT.

6. Has your experience of studying in English here at VUT differ from your expectations?
   - If answered Yes, please explain how.

7. In the time that you have studied in South Africa, have you experienced any problems to study in English?
   - If so, please explain these problems.

8. In the time that you have studied in South Africa, have you experienced any problems that makes your studies more difficult?
   - If so, please explain these problems.

9. If you answered Yes to question 7 and 8 (barriers on academic level), how have you attempted to overcome these barriers?
   - Have you been successful in doing so?

10. Have you made any friends with South African students or other people in South Africa?
    - If answered Yes, please elaborate.
    - If answered No, please explain the reasons for this.

11. In the time that you have studied at VUT, have you experienced any problems in your interaction with other students that makes your studies more difficult?
    - If so, please explain these problems.

12. In the time that you have studied in South Africa, have you experienced any barriers in adapting?
    - If answered Yes, please elaborate.

Appendix D

Invitation to participate in a research study

Inbox

Marita Nieman <marita.nieman70@gmail.com> 12:44 (3 minutes ago)

to student123

Dear student,

This e-mail invites you to participate in the following research study:
Tertiary education in a second language: A case study of the linguistic repertoires and experiences of multilingual students at a South African tertiary institution who previously had French as medium of instruction.

This study is conducted by Ms. M. Nieman for fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MA Intercultural Communication through the University of Stellenbosch. If you accept this invitation, you will be required to participate in an interview where you will be asked questions regarding your experience of studying in English as a second language and the use of English as a medium of instruction. Participation in this study in voluntary which means that you can choose whether you want to participate, or not. There will be no negative consequences, should you decide not to participate. If you do decide to participate, you may terminate your participation at any time without having to provide reasons for doing so.

Once you have made a decision, please let me know by replying to this email.

Kind regards
Marita Nieman
maritan@vut.ac.za
074 240 7236

Appendix E

Informed consent form - English

UNIVERSITEIT•STELLENBOSCH•UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

Dear Student

You are hereby cordially invited to participate in the following research study:

Tertiary education in a second language: A case study of the linguistic repertoires and experiences of multilingual students at a South African tertiary institution who previously had French as medium of instruction.

The study is conducted by Ms. Marita Nieman at the Vaal University of Technology for fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of MA Intercultural Communication at Stellenbosch University.

Participation in this study will require you to complete a **questionnaire** about you language background. Completing this questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes. You will also be requested to complete a **"language portrait"**. The researcher will explain to you exactly what you need to do if you are unsure about something. The language portrait is a silhouette of a body that must be coloured in, using colouring pencils. The different colours used in the silhouette, must represent the different languages that you can speak. Completing this language portrait, should not take longer than 10 minutes. You will also be requested to participate in an individual **interview**, in which basic questions are asked about your knowledge of English as language and your experiences regarding the learning of English and the use of English as a medium of instruction. The individual interview should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Participation in this study is **voluntary**, which means that you can choose whether or not you want to participate and that there will be no negative consequences should you decide not to participate. If you do decide to participate, you may terminate your participation at any time without having to provide reasons for doing so. You are not waiving any legal claims or rights because of your participation in this study. You may also refuse to answer any question you do not want to answer. Participation is **free of charge**, and you will receive **no monetary payment or course credits** for participating. There are

no identifiable risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study. There is **no direct benefit** to participating, but your involvement will assist the researcher in obtaining a better picture of multilingualism at higher education institutions in South Africa, which could ultimately lead to more appropriate policy-making.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain **confidential** and will be disclosed only with your written permission. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of (i) limited access to your data, by only the researcher and her supervisor and (ii) safe storage, on the university premises, of hard copy versions of the response record forms and other raw data. Each participant who is willing to engage in an interview with the researcher necessarily needs to disclose his/her name and contact details to the researcher in order for the researcher to contact them. These students will be assigned a **pseudonym** at the commencement of the research project that will serve as reference throughout the period of participation. This is to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. When the findings of this study are reported in the form of a thesis and/or journal article, any reference to you will be made in such a manner that **you will not be identifiable** to the readers. In future, this data may be used in the form of publication as journal articles, as well as conference presentations to help create a better understanding of the challenges faced by Francophone students studying at tertiary institutions in South Africa where English is the medium of instruction. Such an improved understanding of tertiary institutions can lead to an improved academic experience for you and other French students.

Should you decide to withdraw from the study at any time, data that has already been collected from you, will not be used as part of the research findings. The data already collected from you, will be removed from all hard copy versions as well as all soft copy versions thereof.

Should you feel that you struggle to cope in this new environment of studying in another country in English, please note that VUT has a student counselling and support group that can assist you free of charge. You can visit their Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/scsvut/?ti=as On the Facebook page, you can book appointments and get other information. Alternatively, you can contact them at (016) 950 9244, or you can email lynnm@vut.ac.za

Should you have any **queries** regarding this study, please contact the researcher, Marita Nieman at 074 240 7236 or e-mail: maritan@vut.ac.za or the supervisor of this project, Dr K Huddlestone, at +27 (0)21 808 2007 (during office hours) or e-mail:katevg@sun.ac.za.

Consent:

I _____ have read the above–mentioned and understand the nature of my participation in this research project. I hereby consent to participate in the individual interview and the focus-group interview, should I be selected to form part of the above-mentioned French native speaker group of students,

I was given the opportunity to ask questions about the study and all questions asked were answered to my satisfaction.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

_____ _____

Signature of researcher Date

Appendix F
Informed consent form - French

UNIVERSITEIT•STELLENBOSCH•UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

Cher/chère étudiant(e)

Vous êtes cordialement invité(e) à participer à l'étude de recherche suivante :

Enseignement supérieur dans une deuxième langue: étude de cas des répertoires et expériences linguistiques d'étudiants multilingues dans un établissement d'enseignement supérieur sud-africain qui utilisait auparavant le français comme langue d'enseignement.

L'étude est menée par Mme Marita Nieman à la Vaal University of Technology (VUT) en vue de l'obtention de la Maîtrise en Communication interculturelle à l'Université de Stellenbosch.

Dans le cadre de cette étude on vous demandera de participer à une **entrevue** au cours de laquelle certaines questions de base vous sont posées au sujet de votre connaissance de l'anglais comme langue, vos expériences concernant l'apprentissage de l'anglais et l'utilisation de l'anglais comme langue d'instruction. Le chercheur choisira un groupe d'étudiants français L1 de divers pays d'Afrique francophone qui seront également invités à participer à une **entrevue de groupe** sur ce sujet.

La participation à cette étude se fait sur une base **volontaire**, ce qui signifie que vous êtes libre de participer ou non et qu'il n'y aura pas de conséquences négatives si vous décidez de ne pas participer. Si vous décidez de participer, vous pouvez mettre fin à votre participation à tout moment sans avoir à fournir de raisons pour le faire. En participant à l'étude, vous ne renoncez à aucune réclamation, droit ou recours. Vous pouvez aussi refuser de répondre aux questions auxquelles vous ne voulez pas répondre. La participation est **gratuite**, et vous ne recevrez **aucune compensation financière ou de crédits de cours** pour participer. Aucun risque ou préjudice identifiable n'est associé à la participation à cette étude. **Aucun avantage direct** n'est associé à la participation, mais votre implication aidera le chercheur à mieux connaître la situation du multilinguisme dans les établissements d'enseignement supérieur en Afrique du Sud, ce qui pourrait aboutir à l'élaboration de politiques plus appropriées.

Toute information obtenue dans le cadre de cette étude qui peut vous identifier personnellement restera **confidentielle** et ne sera divulguée qu'avec votre autorisation écrite. La confidentialité sera maintenue

au moyen de (i) l'accès limité aux données, uniquement par le chercheur et son superviseur et (ii) l'entreposage sûr, sur le campus de l'université, des versions papier des formulaires d'enregistrement des réponses et d'autres données brutes. Chaque participant disposé à participer à une interview avec le chercheur doit nécessairement divulguer son nom et ses coordonnées au chercheur afin que celui-ci puisse communiquer avec eux. Ces étudiants se voient attribuer un **pseudonyme** au début du projet de recherche qui servira de référence pendant toute la période de participation. Il s'agit d'assurer l'anonymat et la confidentialité. Lorsque les constatations de cette étude sont présentées sous la forme d'un mémoire et/ou article de revue, toute référence à vous sera faite de telle façon que **votre identité ne soit pas révélée** aux lecteurs.

Si vous avez des **questions** concernant cette étude, veuillez communiquer avec le chercheur, Marita Nieman au 074 240 7236 ou e-mail : maritan@vut.ac.za ou le superviseur de ce projet, Dr Huddlestone au +27 (0)21 808 2007 (pendant les heures de bureau) ou e-mail : katevg@sun.ac.za.

Consentement :

Je _____ ai lu ce qui précède et comprends la nature de ma participation à ce projet de recherche. Je consens par la présente à participer à l'entrevue individuelle et à l'entrevue de groupe, au cas où je serai retenu(e) pour faire partie du groupe d'étudiants de langue maternelle française,
J'ai eu l'occasion de poser des questions au sujet de l'étude et toutes mes questions ont été répondues à ma satisfaction.

_____ _____

Signature du participant Date

_____ _____

Signature du chercheur Date